Islam

and Religious Pluralism

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point

An indepth discussion on the Islamic perspective of Religious Pluralism. This book offers rational answers to questions such as: will the great inventors and scientists, despite their worthy services for humanity, go to Hell? Will the likes of Pasteur and Edison go to Hell whilst indolent people who have spent their lives in a corner of the ?Masjid go to Heaven

Foreword

From the frying pan of the ‘Narrow-Minded, Dry, Holy Ones’ “tang nazari khoshk muqaddasan” into the fire of Hick’s Religious Pluralism

Some years ago, in Brampton Canada, my Muharram majālis provoked the question: Where will Mother Teresa go – Heaven or Hell? This was in reaction to my submission challenging the notion of religious pluralism, which seemed to have found favour amongst members of the congregation, who as a result of their intellectual discussions within academia, appeared to have concluded that ‘all roads lead to .’Rome

My deliberations with a number of such academic members of our community revealed their unawareness that the original concept of religious pluralism was a .subtle defence to the doctrine of salvation through Christ

Thereby, providing in Christianity, toleration for other religions. Essentially, the roots of religious pluralism lie in the development of political liberalism in eighteenth century .Europe, which was reeling from the horrible tales of religious persecution

The Enlightened European thinkers of the time were reacting to

p: ۱

religious intolerance, which had resulted in the history of sectarian wars to be avoided .by all means

Having witnessed the consequences of religious intolerance, the eighteenth century European Christians were anxious to recover through an ideology that was entrenched in religious principles and thereby securing its permanent effect of ensuring peace and progress in Europe both politically and philosophically – whilst .preserving the sanctity of Christianity

The principal advocate, Professor John Hick, devised the convoluted concept of religious pluralism by incorporating the Christian doctrine of salvation, allowing almost .anyone to enter heaven

Ironically, to make his case, Hick used amongst other arguments Rūmī's fable of the blind men describing an elephant. Thus suggesting that in our visualization of the .ultimate reality, we are in the position of the blind men describing the elephant

Our ultimate reality is limited by the structures of the various religions. In other words, be it through the trunk, or the leg or the ear, it was sufficient to conceptualize the .elephant

While Rūmī used the parable to demonstrate our limitations in knowing the ultimate reality, Hick expounded religious pluralism by suggesting that the world's numerous .faiths had reconcilable differences in striving for the ultimate reality

It is indeed a sorry state of affairs that when we are blessed with far more profound answers to the issues of rigid exclusivity, that Muslim intellectuals should be .impressed by Hick's weak defence supported only by marginalised Christian thinkers

This timely translation of the Persian essay on

Islām and Religious Pluralism by Āyatullāh Shahīd Mut'ahharī is a much needed contribution to further this debate, so as to enable us to better understand the Islāmic .perspective on religious pluralism

This work is yet another example of this deceased scholar's ingenious foresight, for decades ago, he undertook to address the topical questions that vex Muslim youths .exposed to Western academia today

This book offers rational answers to questions such as: will the great inventors and scientists, despite their worthy services for humanity, go to Hell? Will the likes of Pasteur and Edison go to Hell whilst indolent people who have spent their lives in a ?corner of the Masjid go to Heaven? Has God created Heaven solely for the Shī`as

In contrast to Hick's compromising view, Shī`ī scholars generally agree that God's damnation does not arbitrarily apply to all who lack faith in His revelations. For instance, exceptions are made for those who are incapable (qāsir) such as children .and adults who are intellectually impaired

The scholars of the school of Ahlul Baīt (as) make a distinction between the incapable (qāsir) and the negligent (muqassir) who have misplaced convictions despite having access to Islām. Shahīd Mut'ahharī's enquiry into the problem of religious pluralism .elaborates the distinction of these two categories

What is interesting however, is that he defines the category of the incapable to include those for whom Islām has not been accessible. For instance, a remote residence where Islām has not been propagated or those living in an

.Islāmaphobic environment which has resulted in ill-founded misconceptions

Shahīd Mut'ahharī's brilliant rationale of the incapable (qāsir) establishes that heaven .has not been reserved for a minority within a minority

Thus, boldly answering the dogmatism actively promoted by those he has identified as "narrow minded dry holy ones" (tang nazari khushk muqaddasan). The impact of .such dogmatism is manifested in many superstitions of the Shī`ī masses

To illustrate, I can do no better than to quote one such example by Āyatullāh :Mut'ahharī

Will (we) make a will that a large sum out of the money that we have acquired" through wrong means or that we should have spent in our lifetime in good causes – but didn't – should be given to the caretakers of one of the holy shrines in order for us to be buried near the graves of God's saints, so that the Angels don't dare punish us." Such people should know that they have been blinded and the curtain of negligence ".has covered their eyes

I conclude that to seek other means to satisfy intellect curiosities on this discussion inevitably results in falling from the frying pan of the tang nazari khoshk muqaddasan .into the fire of Religious Pluralism

Hasnain Walji

Plano Texas

May ٧th ٢٠٠۴ – ١٧th Rabiul Awwal ١۴٢۵

Introduction

point

By Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi

Is Islām the only right path? Is as-Ŝirātul Mustaqīm (the right path) a single phenomena or are there multiple paths leading to the same destination? What

happens to the non-Muslims who live a decent life

and do not violate the rights of other people? Do they gain salvation, and go to .Paradise or not? These are some of the burning questions of the modern era

The concept of religious pluralism is not new; it has been discussed in one form or another by past philosophers and theologians of various schools. However, with the increased interaction between followers of different religions and inter-faith .dialogues, religious pluralism has taken a new life in the stream of current thought

When the great philosopher, Āyatullāh Murtadhā Mut'ahharī, wrote his seminal work, `Adl-e Ilāhī (The Divine Justice) about thirty-five years ago, the debate on religious .pluralism had not yet become that popular in Iran

What you have in your hands is the translation of `Adl-e Ilāhī's last chapter on "Good ."Deeds of Non-Muslims

The more appropriate place to discuss religious pluralism and its related issues would be under the theme of "nubuwwah - prophethood" when discussing the finality of Prophet Muhammad's (S) prophethood, however the question "What happens to the good deeds of non-Muslims?" is also connected to the theme of Divine justice; and so .Āyatullāh Mut'ahharī has answered it at the end of his `Adl-e Ilāhī

Nonetheless, before discussing that question in detail, Āyatullāh Mut'ahharī has also briefly stated his views on religious pluralism itself. As you will read yourself, he expresses the prevailing view of the Muslim theologians and philosophers that Islām .is the only right path

However, and more importantly, he cautions the readers not

to jump to the conclusion that since Islām is the only right path therefore all non-Muslims will go to hell. The exclusivist view of Islām being the right path does not .automatically and necessarily lead to the belief that all non-Muslims will go to hell

In the last one and a half decades, the question of religious pluralism has been passionately debated among the Muslims in the West as well as the East. Some Muslim intellectuals have even tried to impose the concept of religious pluralism onto !the Qur’ān itself

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly present this discussion as a preamble to .the writing of the great scholar, Āyatullāh Murtadhā Mut’ahharī

While discussing the concept of pluralism in the Islāmic context, it is important to define the term clearly. Pluralism can be used in two different meanings: “Social pluralism” in the sociological sense means a society which consists of a multi-faith or .multi-cultural mosaic

Religious pluralism” in the theological sense means a concept in which all religions“ .are considered to be equally true and valid

Social Pluralism

As far as social pluralism is concerned, Islām seeks for peaceful co-existence and mutual tolerance between the people of different religions and cultures. Among the three Abrahāmic religions, it is only Islām which has accorded recognition to Judaism and Christianity. Judaism does not recognize Jesus as the awaited Messiah or the Prophet; and Christianity does not recognize Muhammad (S) as the true Prophet and .Messenger of God

In

the Islāmic worldview, God sent many prophets and messengers to guide mankind; the number given in the Ĥadīth is ١٢۴,٠٠٠ prophets. The first prophet was Ādam and the last Prophet was Muhammad - the Prophet of Islām (S). However, not all the ١٢۴,٠٠٠ prophets were of the same rank and status.(١)

Five of these prophets are given the highest rank in the spiritual hierarchy: and they are Nūh (Noah), Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsā (Moses), `Isā (Jesus), and Muhammad (as). Almighty Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَمِنْكَ وَمِنْ نُوحٍ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ.

"And when We made a covenant with the prophets: with you, with Nūh, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and `Isā, son of Mariam..."(٢)

A Muslim is required to believe in all the prophets, otherwise he cannot be considered a "Muslim".(٣) If a person, for instance, says that I believe in Muhammad, `Isā, Ibrāhīm and Nūh but not in Mūsā as one of the prophets of God, then he cannot be accepted as a Muslim; similarly, if a person believes in all the prophets but refuses to accept `Isā as one of the prophets and messengers of God, then he is not a Muslim.

That is why Islām considers the Christian and the Jewish communities as "the People of the Book" or "the People of Scripture" (Ahlul Kitāb). Islām has even allowed a Muslim man to marry a Christian or Jewish woman, but not those from the other faiths.

What is noteworthy is that

١- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Baqarah (٢), Verse ٢۵٣; Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Banī Isrā'īl (١٧), Verse ۵۵

٢- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Ahzāb (٣٣), Verse ٧; also see Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Shūra (۴٢), Verse ١٣: شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى.. "He has made plain to you the religion that He enjoined upon Nūh, and that which We have revealed to you, and that We have enjoined upon Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, and `Isā..."

Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Āli Imrān (۳), Verse ۸۴ -۳

Islām accorded this recognition to the Ahlul Kitāb fourteen centuries ago when there was absolutely no talk of tolerance among people of different faiths or an ecumenical movement among religions.(1)

On a socio-political level, a Muslim government would readily sign an agreement with its Christian and Jewish minorities. Imām `Alī Zaīnul `Ābidīn, the great-grandson of the Prophet, writes:

"It is the right of the non-Muslims living in a Muslim country that you should accept what Allāh has accepted from them and fulfill the responsibilities which Allāh has accorded them... And there must be a barrier keeping you from doing any injustice to them, from depriving them of the protection of Allāh, and from flaunting the commitments of Allāh and His Messenger concerning them. Because we have been told that the Holy Prophet said, 'Whosoever does injustice to a protected non-Muslim, I will be his enemy (on the Day of Judgement).'"(2)

Although Islām does not accord to followers of other religions the same recognition that it has accorded to Jews and Christians, it believes in peaceful co-existence with them. One of the earliest messages of peaceful co-existence given by the Prophet Muhammad (S) to the idol-worshippers of Mecca is reflected in Chapter ١٠٩ of the Qur'ān:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ. لاَ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ. وَلاَ أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ. وَلاَ أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدتُّمْ. وَلاَ أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ. لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ

Say: "O unbelievers! Neither do I worship what you worship; nor do you worship what I worship. Neither am I going

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1- It took the Catholic Church almost two thousand years to recognize the non-Christians including the Muslims. The Second Vatican Council declared in ١٩٦٤ that "Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his church, but who seek God with a sincere heart, and moved by grace, try in their

actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience–those too may achieve eternal salvation." Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, ۱۹۷۵) p. ۳۶۷.

۲- Imām `Alī Zaīnul `Ābidīn, Risālatul Huqūq, tr. SSA Rizvi (Vancouver: VIEF, ۱۹۸۹) p. ۳۶.

to worship what you worship; nor are you going to worship what I worship. To you shall be your religion and to me shall be my religion."

From the historical perspective, the treatment that Muslim societies have given to the minorities under their rule, especially the Christians and the Jews, is comparatively better than the way minorities were treated in Christian Europe.(1)

Religious Pluralism

The most famous proponent of modern religious pluralism is John Hick, who abandoned his Catholic exclusivist view and formulated his specific theory in the seventies. Hick's pluralistic hypothesis claims that each religion in its own way represents an authentic revelation of the Divine world and a fully authentic means of salvation.

He believes that all religions are culturally conditioned responses to the same ultimate reality; and, therefore, are equally valid, and salvation is possible through any of them.

Hick uses the famous story of the Hindu mystics to illustrate his point:

"An elephant was brought to a group of blind men who had never encountered such an animal before. One felt a leg and reported that an elephant is a great living pillar. Another felt the trunk and reported that an elephant is a great snake. Another felt a tusk and reported that an elephant is like a sharp ploughshare, and so on. And then they all quarrelled together, each claiming that his own account was the truth and therefore all the others false. In fact of course, they were all true, but each referring only to

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١ - Ira Lapidus writes: "The Ottomans, like previous Muslim regimes, considered the non-Muslim subjects autonomous but dependent peoples whose internal social, religious, and communal life was regulated by their own religious organizations, but their leaders were appointed by, and responsible to, a Muslim state." A History of

Islāmic Societies (NY: Cambridge University Press, ۱۹۹۰) p. ۳۲۳. Also see Marshall Hodgson, The Venture of Islām, vol. ۱ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, ۱۹۷۴) p. ۳۰۶.

(one aspect of the total reality and all expressed in very imperfect analogies."(1)

There are many flaws in Hick's hypothesis. The most serious problem is of reconciling the conflicting truth-claims of various religions: for example, monotheism of Islām as opposed to polytheism of Hinduism; death and resurrection of Islām and Christianity as opposed to reincarnations and reaching the state of nirvana of Buddhism; salvation through Trinity as opposed to Tawhīd (Monotheism), etc.

In order to resolve the problem of conflicting truth-claims, Hick suggests that religious traditions differ on three issues:

(1) on historical facts;

(2) on trans-historical facts;

(3) on conceptions of the Real.

Then he proposes the solution for these differences.

For the disagreements on historical facts, Hick suggests that they are minor issues and they could be resolved by application of the historical method.

As for differences on trans-historical facts (i.e., matters that cannot be established by historical or empirical evidence such as "is the universe temporal or eternal" or "death and then resurrection versus reincarnations"), he says that the resolution of such differences are not necessary for salvation and that religions need to dialogue more in order to modify their beliefs.

For differing conceptions of the Real, Hick assumes that all religious traditions are authentic manifestations of the Real and that each tradition's deity is an authentic face of the Real.(2)

Finally, Hick believes that any religious belief that would conflict with, and if literally true, falsify another religious belief, must be treated as mythological.

The end result of this theory

۱- Hick, God and the Universe of Faith (London: Macmillan, ۱۹۷۷) p. ۱۴۰.

۲- Hick, An Interpretation of Religion (New Haven: Yale University Press, ۱۹۸۹) p. ۳۶۴-۳۶۵.

is that in order to make it workable, Hick would have to redefine many religious beliefs in ways that the founders and followers of those religions would strongly protest! Take the example of the historical status of Jesus from Islāmic, Christian and Jewish perspectives:

Concept	Christianity	Islām	Judaism
1. Miraculous birth	Yes	Yes	No
2. Miracles	Yes	Yes	No
3. Status	Messiah Son of God	Prophet Messenger	No

Revelation .۴

.Gospels written by different authors

Injīl revealed by God to Jesus

No

Death and .۵

After

.Crucified for the redemption of sins and resurrected after three days

.Never crucified; taken to the Heavens

.Crucified and died

Apart from the two first items (and that also only between Islām and Christianity), all three Abrahamic religions have conflicting views on Jesus. According to John Hick's theory, the first two common beliefs would be considered as "facts" (at the least in Christianity and Islām) whereas the other points of disagreements must be treated in two possible ways: Either these conflicting views should be resolved by !"historical/empirical inquiry or they should be put in the category of "mythology

The first solution will force the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims to reject many verses of their respective scriptures while the second solution will place many statements from the Bible and the Qur'ān into the category of "mythology". None .would be acceptable to any of the three faiths

I think this one example (that also of Islām vis-à-vis Christianity and Judaism which are closer to one another than Islām vis-à-vis Hinduism and Buddhism) suffices to .show that Hick's theory of religious pluralism is not workable

Based on Hick's solution

for meta-historical facts (issues related to death and after), Muslims will be forced to consider more than five hundred verses of the Qur'ān on death, resurrection and afterlife as part of "mythology"!

Coming to the third type of differences on conceptions of the Real, Dr. John Hick wants us to believe that the Trinity of Christians, the multiples idols of Hindus, and the Tawhīd (Monotheism) of Muslims are equally valid and true! This hypothesis weakens the faith in one's religion and pushes one towards agnosticism if not atheism.

Using Immanuel Kant's view of dualistic categories, Hick says that there is a difference "between an entity as 'it is in itself' and as 'it appears in perception'."(١)

Something could be completely true "in itself" but when it is perceived by others, it is relatively true. Based on this idea, Hick wants all religions to accept all differing conceptions of God as equally authentic because none of them are absolutely true, all are only relatively true.

The way Hick has used the story of the blind men and the elephant, he has assumed all religious people to be blind and that they lack the ability to know the complete truth. Unfortunately, he has missed the moral of the same story as given by Mawlānā Rūmī:

Some Hindus have an elephant to show.

No one here has ever seen an elephant.

They bring it at night to a dark room.

One by one, we go in the dark and come out

saying how we experience the animal.

One

John Hick, An Interpretation of Religion, p. ۲۴۱. In other words, we cannot really - ۱ know God; what we know is our perception of Him. Muslim philosophers do not accept Kant's theory. For more on the theory of knowledge from the Islāmic perspective in English, see Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabā'tabā'ī, The Elements of Islāmic Metaphysic, tr. S.A.Q. Qarā'i (London: ICAS Press, ۲۰۰۳) p. ۱۱۵-۱۳۲ and also Part One of S.M. Bāqir as-Sadr, Our Philosophy, tr. Shams C. Inati (London: Muĥammadi Trust, .(۱۹۸۷

of us happens to touch the trunk.

“A water-pipe kind of creature.”

Another, the ear. “A very strong, always moving

back and forth, fan-animal.”

Another, the leg. “I find it still,

like a column on a temple.”

Another touches the curved back.

“A leathery throne.”

Another, the cleverest, feels the tusk.

“A rounded sword made of porcelain.”

He’s proud of his description.

Each of us touches one place

and understands the whole in that way.

The palm and the fingers feeling in the dark are

how the senses explore the reality of the elephant.

If each of us held a candle there,

and if we went in together,

we could see it.(١)

These men were groping in darkness and, therefore, they came with wrong description of the elephant; if they had used a “candle”, they would have seen the light! In Islām, God does not let a searcher for truth grope in darkness:

للّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

Allāh is the Protector of the believers, He brings them forth from the shadows into“ (the light.” (۲

The Qur'ān and Religious Pluralism

Some Muslim intellectuals have attempted to read the theory of religious pluralism into the Qur'ān itself. The most famous argument used by them is that the term .“Islām,” in the Qur'ān, should not be taken as a noun but just as a verb

Sometimes they differentiate between “islam” (the act of submission) and “Islam” (the religion); and say that the main message of God and the basis of salvation is submission to God, and that it does not matter whether the submission takes place through Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, `Isa or Muhammad

p: ۱۳

.The Essential Rumi, translated by C. Barks (New Jersey: Castle Books, ۱۹۹۷) p. ۵۲۵ -۱

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Baqarah (۲), Verse ۲۵۷ -۲

.(as)

This is nothing new; even Āyatullāh Mut’ahharī, in the present work, writes, “If someone were to say that the meaning of ‘Islām’ in this verse is not our religion in particular; rather, the intent is the literal meaning of the word, or submission to God, the answer would be that undoubtedly ‘Islām’ means submission and the religion of Islām is the religion of submission, but the reality of submission has a particular form in each age. And in this age, its form is the same cherished religion that was brought by the Seal of the Prophets (Muhammad). So it follows that the word ‘Islām’ .(submission) necessarily applies to it alone

In other words, the necessary consequence of submission to God is to accept His“ commandments, and it is clear that one must always act on the final Divine commandments. And the final commandments of God is what His final Messenger ([Muhammad] has brought.”(١)

[Islām” in the Qur’ān [٣:١٩-٢٠“

:When the Qur’ān says, for example

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الإِسْلاَمُ

,(Surely the religion with Allāh is al-Islām,”(٢“

some Muslim intellectuals say that it does not mean “Islām” the religion that started in the seventh century by Prophet Muhammad (S). They say it means “islām,” .submission to God through any of the Abrahamic religions

In their attempt to read a politically correct idea into the Qur’ān, they even ignore the :context of the verse. Let us read the whole passage together

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الإِسْلاَمُ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلاَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ

See the discussion in this book. Āyatullāh Mut’ahharī’s comment that “the reality of -١

submission has a particular form in each age" is also key to the proper understanding .of Sūratul Baqarah (٢), Verse ٦٢

Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Āli Imrān (٣), Verse ١٩ -٢

مَا جاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْياً بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

Surely the religion with Allāh is al-Islām. And those who have been given the Book" [i.e., the Christians and the Jews] did not show opposition but after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the verses ".of Allāh, then surely Allāh is quick in reckoning

فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ

But if they dispute with you, say: "I have submitted myself entirely to Allāh and (so" ".has) everyone who follows me

وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالأُمِّيِّينَ أَأَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلاَغُ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

And to those who have been given the Book [i.e., the Christians and the Jews] and to" the idol-worshippers [of Mecca], say: "Do you submit?" If they submit, then they are rightly guided; but if they reject, then upon you is only the delivery of the message. (And Allāh sees the servants."(١)

:This passage clearly states the following

Al-Islām" mentioned in this verse is the message of submission as brought by" .(Prophet Muhammad (S

The People of the Scripture (i.e., Christians and Jews) are in opposition of this version .of submission to God

The Prophet Muhammad (S) and his followers are followers of the Islām which was .brought by him

The People of the Scripture are being asked to submit to God through Prophet Muhammad (S) even though they already are followers of Prophets Mūsā (as) and .(`Isā (as

The same message is

Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Āli Imrān (۳), Verse ۱۹-۲۰ -۱

.given to the idol-worshippers of Mecca

If the People of the Scripture do not submit (as Prophet Muhammad (S) and his followers have submitted), then they are not "rightly guided".

So the term al-Islām, in this verse, refers to "submission to God" through His final message brought by Prophet Muhammad (S) and not through previous prophets.

"Islām" in the Qur'ān [٣:٨٣-٨٥]

Another passage from the same chapter is also relevant for understanding the meaning of "Islām":

أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ طَوْعاً وَكَرْهاً وَإِلَـيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ

"Is it then other than Allāh's religion that they seek while to Him submits whoever is in the heavens and the Earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him shall they be returned?"

قُلْ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنْـزِلَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِىَ مُوسَى وَعِيسَى وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لاَ نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

"Say: "We believe in Allāh, and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Ibrāhīm, Ismā'īl, Ishāq, Ya`qūb, and the Tribes; and what was given to Mūsā and `Isā and to the prophets from their Lord. We do not make any distinction between (the claim of) any of them, and to Him do we submit."

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الإِسْلاَمِ دِيناً فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى الآخِرَهِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

"And whoever desires a religion other than Islām, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers."

This passage clearly explains basic beliefs

:of Allāh’s religion

Among those basic beliefs is the requirement to believe in “what has been revealed to .(us” (i.e., the Qur’ān that has been revealed to Muslims

Islām – submission” only follows when one accepts all the prophets and does not“ .(differentiate in the truth of any one of them, including Prophet Muhammad (S

[Islām” and “Imān “in the Qur’ān [٢:١٣٥-١٣٧“

The following passage in Chapter Two of the Qur’ān further clarifies the meaning of :”“islām–submission” as well as “imān–belief

وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُوداً أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا

”.And they say: “Be Jew or Christian and you will be guided aright“

قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفاً وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

Say: “Nay! (we follow) the religion of Ibrāhīm, the sincere, and he was not one of the“ ”.polytheists

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى وَعِيسَى وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لاَ نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

Say: “We believe in Allāh, and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed“ to Ibrāhīm, Ismā’īl, Ishāq, Ya`qūb, and the Tribes; and what was given to Mūsā and `Isā and to the prophets from their Lord. We do not make any distinction between ”.(the claim of) any of them, and to Him do we submit

فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمْ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

If they (i.e., the Jews and the Christians) then believe as you believe, then they are“ rightly guided; but if

they refuse, then they are only in great opposition; and Allāh will suffice you against ".them. He is the Hearing, the Knowing

These two verses clearly define the "imān – faith and belief" of the Muslims as opposed to that of the Jews and the Christians. Central to the imān of the Muslims is belief in the revelation of all the prophets, including the revelation to the Prophet Muhammad (S). They clearly say that if the Jews and the Christians "believe as you .believe," only then will they be rightly guided

:"Sūratul Baqarah (٢), Verse ٢٨٥ also confirms this meaning of "imān

آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْـزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلاَئِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لاَ نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ

The Messenger (i.e., Muhammad) has believed in whatever that has been revealed to" him from his Lord; and the believers all believe in Allāh, His Angels, His books, and His messengers. (And they say:) "We do not differentiate between (the claim of) any one ".of His messengers

A note on "we do not differentiate between any one of the messengers" or "we do not make any distinction between any one of them": it does not mean that all the prophets .and messengers of Allāh (S) are of the same rank and status

We have already mentioned that there are five prophets who rank highest in the spiritual hierarchy. Rather, this means that we do not make any distinction in the truth of any of the prophets; all

.are equally true in their claim

This is unlike the Jews who accept all the prophets but reject `Isā (as) and Muhammad (S) or the Christians who accept all the prophets but reject Muhammad .((S

Prophet Muhammad (S) and Religious Pluralism

Those Muslim intellectuals who preach about religious pluralism in Islām seem to be .oblivious of some historical facts of Islāmic history and the Prophet's life

If Judaism and Christianity are concurrently valid paths of submission to God, then why did the Prophet Muhammad (S) work so hard to convey his message even to the Jews and the Christians? If they were already on the Right Path (Ŝirat Mustaqīm), then ?why did the Prophet (S) feel it important to invite them to Islām

After the peace treaty of Hudaybiyya in ۶ A.H., the Prophet of Islām (S) sent emissaries to various rulers and tribes around and beyond the Arabian Peninsula with a distinct purpose of inviting them to Islām. According to historians, around ۲۵ letters (were sent by the Prophet (S) to various rulers and tribes.(۱

Among those who were sent to the Christian rulers and tribes, we see the following names: Dihyah al-Kalbī sent to Heraclius, the Emperor of Byzantine; `Amr bin Umayyah Zamrī to the Negus, the King of Abyssinia; Hāt'ib bin Abī Baltā'a sent to the Muqawqis, the King of Egypt; and the tribes of Ghassan and Ĥanīfah (in northern .Arabia). Three letters are important and relevant to our discussion

:In his letter to Heraclius, the Byzantine Emperor, the Prophet Muhammad (S) wrote

Peace ..."

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۱ - Muhammad Ibrāhīm Āyatī, Tārīkh-e Payghambar-e Islām (Tehran: Tehran .University Press, n.d.) p. ۴۸۰-۴۸۲

.be upon him who follows the guidance

I invite you to accept Islām. Accept Islām and you will prosper and Allāh will give you double rewards. But if you refuse, then the sin of your people also will fall upon your .shoulders

O' People of the Scripture, come to the word common between us and you that we shall not worship anything but Allāh, and that we shall not associate anything with Him, nor shall some of us take others for lords besides Allāh. But if you turn back, then ".say: Bear witness that we are Muslims

:In the letter to the Negus, the King of Abyssinia, the Prophet Muhammad (S) wrote

.Peace be upon him who follows the guidance ..."

Praise be to Allāh besides whom there is no other god, the Sovereign, the Holy One, .the Preserver of Peace, the Keeper of the Faithful, the Guardian

I bear witness that Jesus, son of Mary, is indeed a spirit of God and His word, which He conveyed unto the chaste Mary. He created Jesus through His word just as He .created Ādam with His hands

And now I call you to Allāh who is One and has no partner, and to friendship in His obedience. Follow me and believe in what has been revealed to me, for I am the .Messenger of Allāh. I invite you and your people to Allāh, the Mighty, the Glorious

.I have conveyed the message, and it is up to you to accept it

Once again, peace be upon

".him who follows the path of guidance

In the letter sent to the Muqawqis, the King of Egypt and a Coptic Christian, the :Prophet Muhammad (S) wrote

.Peace be upon him who follows the guidance..."

I invite you to accept the message of Islām. Accept it and you shall prosper. But if you .turn away, then upon you shall also fall the sin of the Copts

O' People of the Scripture, come to a word common between us and you that we shall worship none but Allāh and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him and that none of .us shall regard anyone as lord besides God

(And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims."(١)

Even the arrival of the delegation from Christian Najranis and how the Prophet (S) invited them to Islām and, finally, the mubāhala with them is in the same spirit of .inviting the Ahlul Kitāb to Islām

All these letters and the meeting with Najranis prove beyond any doubt that if the Ahlul Kitāb (the People of the Scripture) were on Ŝirāt mustaqīm - on the right path .that leads to salvation - then the Prophet (S) would not have invited them to Islām

Important Caution

At the conclusion of this introduction, I would like to reiterate the caution that believing in Islām as the only valid path of submission to God does not automatically .and necessarily lead to the belief that all non-Muslims will go to hell

Neither does this exclusivist view of Islām as the only sirāt

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١- .Ibid, p. ٤٨٣- ٤٩٤

mustaqīm prevent us from promoting tolerance and peaceful co-existence among the .followers of various religions, especially the Jews and the Christians

:While talking about polytheist parents, Almighty Allāh says

وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاکَ عَلى أَنْ تُشْرِکَ بِی مَا لَیْسَ لَکَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلاَ تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِی الدُّنْیا مَعْرُوفًا

And if they insist on you to associate with Me (someone as on object of worship) of" what you have no knowledge, then do not obey them, however interact with them in (this world kindly ..."(1)

Thus, a Muslim has to resist the un-Islāmic influence of non-Muslims, but still be kind to them. In other words, although your paths in the hereafter will be separate, that .does not prevent you from being kind, merciful, and just to non-Muslims in this world

Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi

Toronto, Ontario

May 13th, 2004 / 23th of Rabīul Awwal 1425 AH

Biography of the late Ayatullah Murtadha Mutahhari

Ayatullāh Murt'adhā Mut'ahharī, one of the principle architects of the new Islāmic consciousness in Iran, was born on February 2nd, 1920, in Farīmān, then a village and now a township about sixty kilometres from Mashhad, the great centre of Shī`a (pilgrimage and learning in Eastern Iran.(2

His father was Muhammad Ĥusaīn Mut'ahharī, a renown scholar who studied in Najaf and spent several years in Egypt and the Hijāz before returning to Farīmān. The elder Mut'ahharī was of a different caste of mind then his son, who in any event came to .outshine him

The father was devoted to the works of the celebrated traditionalist, Mullāh Muhammad Bāqir Majlisī; whereas

Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Luqmān (۳۱), Verse ۱۵ -۱

This sketch of the life and works of Āyatullāh Muṭahharī is based chiefly on - ۲ Muhammad Wa'izzāda Khurāsānī's, "Sayrī dar Zindagi-yi `Ilmī wa Inqilābiīyi Ustad Shahīd Murtadhā Muṭahharī," in Yadnāma-yi Ustād Shahīd Murtadhā Muṭahharī, ed. `Abdul Karīm Surūsh, Tehran, ۱۳۶۰ Sh./۱۹۸۱, pp. ۳۱۹-۳۸۰, an article rich in information on many aspects of the recent history of Islāmic Irān. Reference has also been made to Mujtabā Muṭahhari, "Zindagi-yi Pidaram," in Harakat (journal of the students at the Tehran Faculty of Theology), no. ۱ (n.d.), pp. ۵-۱۶; M. Hoda, In Memory of Martyr Muṭahharī, a pamphlet published by the Ministry of Islāmic Guidance, Tehran, April, ۱۹۸۲; and Āyatullāh Muṭahharī's autobiographical introduction to the eighth edition of .`Ilal-i Girayish ba Maddīgarī; Qum, ۱۳۵۷ Sh./۱۹۷۸, pp. ۷ff

the son’s great hero among the Shī`a scholars of the past was the theosophist Mullā .Sadrā

Nonetheless, Āyatullāh Mut’ahharī always retained great respect and affection for his father, who was also his first teacher, and he dedicated to him one of his most popular books, Dastān-e-Rastān (“The Epic of the Righteous”), first published in ۱۹۶۰, and which was later chosen as book of the year by the Iranian National Commission for .UNESCO in ۱۹۶۵

At the exceptionally early age of twelve, Mut’ahharī began his formal religious studies at the teaching institution in Mashhad, which was then in a state of decline, partly because of internal reasons and partly because of the repressive measures directed .by Ridhā Khān, the first Pahlavī autocrat, against all Islāmic institutions

But in Mashhad, Mut’ahharī discovered his great love for philosophy, theology, and mysticism, a love that remained with him throughout his life and came to shape his :entire outlook on religion

I can remember that when I began my studies in Mashhad and was still engaged in“ learning elementary Arabic, the philosophers, mystics, and theologians impressed me far more than other scholars and scientists, such as inventors and explorers. Naturally I was not yet acquainted with their ideas, but I regarded them as heroes on the stage (of thought.”(۱

Accordingly, the figure in Mashhad who aroused the greatest devotion in Mut’ahharī .was Mīrzā Mahdī Shahīdī Razavī, a teacher of philosophy

But Razavī died in ۱۹۳۶, before Mut’ahharī was old enough to participate in his classes, and partly

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۱- `Ilal-e-Girayish ba Maddīgarī, Page ۹.

because of this reason he left Mashhad the following year to join the growing number .of students congregating in the teaching institution in Qum

Thanks to the skillful stewardship of Shaykh `Abdul Karīm Hā'irī, Qum was on its way to becoming the spiritual and intellectual capital of Islāmic Iran, and Mut'ahharī was .able to benefit there from the instruction of a wide range of scholars

He studied Fiqh and Uŝūl - the core subjects of the traditional curriculum - with Āyatullāh Ĥujjat Kuhkamarī, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muhammad Dāmād, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muhammad Ridhā Gulpāyagānī, and Ĥajj Sayyid Ŝadr al-Dīn as-Ŝadr. But more important than all these was Āyatullāh Burujerdī, the successor of Ĥā'irī as director of the teaching establishment in Qum. Mut'ahharī attended his lectures from his arrival in Qum in ۱۹۴۴ until his departure for Tehran in ۱۹۵۲, and he nourished a deep respect for .him

Fervent devotion and close affinity characterized Mut'ahharī's relationship with his prime mentor in Qum, Āyatullāh Rūhullāh Khumaynī. When Mut'ahharī arrived in Qum, Āyatullāh Khumaynī was a young lecturer, but he was already marked out from his contemporaries by the profoundness and comprehensiveness of his Islāmic vision .and his ability to convey it to others

These qualities were manifested in the celebrated lectures on ethics that he began giving in Qum in the early ۱۹۳۰s. The lectures attracted a wide audience from outside as well as inside the religious teaching institution and had a profound impact on all those who attended them. Mut'ahharī made his

:first acquaintance with Āyatullah Khumaynī at these lectures

When I migrated to Qum, I found the object of my desire in a personality who“ possessed all the attributes of Mīrzā Mahdī (Shahīdī Razavī) in addition to others that were peculiarly his own. I realized that the thirst of my spirit would be quenched at the pure spring of that personality. Although I had still not completed the preliminary stages of my studies and was not yet qualified to embark on the study of the rational sciences (ma`qulāt), the lectures on ethics given by that beloved personality every Thursday and Friday were not restricted to ethics in the dry, academic sense but dealt with gnosis and spiritual wayfaring, and thus, they intoxicated me. I can say without exaggeration that those lectures aroused in me such ecstasy that their effect remained with me until the following Monday or Tuesday. An important part of my intellectual and spiritual personality took shape under the influence of those lectures and the other classes I took over a period of twelve years with that spiritual master ((ustād-i ilahī) [meaning Āyatullāh Khumaynī]."(۱)

In about ۱۹۴۶, Āyatullāh Khumaynī began lecturing to a small group of students that included both Mut'ahharī and his roommate at the Fayziya Madressah, Āyatullāh Muntazarī, on two key philosophical texts, the Asfar al-Arba`a of Mullā Ŝadra and the Sharh-e-Manzuma of Mullā Hādī Sabzwārī. Mut'ahharī's participation in this group, which continued to meet until about ۱۹۵۱, enabled him to establish more intimate

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.Ilal-i Girayish ba Maddigari, Page ۹` -۱

.links with his teacher

Also in ۱۹۴۶, at the urging of Mut'ahharī and Muntazarī, the Āyatullāh Khumaynī taught his first formal course on Fiqh and Uŝūl, taking the chapter on rational proofs from the second volume of Akhund Khurāsānī's Kifāyatal Uŝūl as his teaching text. Mut'ahharī followed his course assiduously, while still pursuing his studies of Fiqh with Āyatullāh .Burūjerdī

In the first two post-war decades, Āyatullāh Khumaynī trained numerous students in Qum who became leaders of the Islāmic Revolution and the Islāmic Republic, such that through them (as well as directly), the imprint of his personality was visible on all .the key developments of the past decade

But none among his students bore to Āyatullāh Khumaynī the same relationship of affinity as Mut'ahharī, an affinity to which the Āyatullāh Khumaynī himself has borne .witness to

The pupil and master shared a profound attachment to all aspects of traditional scholarship, without in any way being its captive; a comprehensive vision of Islām as a total system of life and belief, with particular importance ascribed to its .philosophical and mystical aspects

An absolute loyalty to the religious institution, tempered by an awareness of the necessity of reform; a desire for comprehensive social and political change, accompanied by a great sense of strategy and timing; and an ability to reach out beyond the circle of the traditionally religious, and gain the attention and loyalty of the .secularly educated

Among the other teachers whose influence Mut'ahharī was exposed in Qum, was the great exegete of the Qur'ān and

philosopher, Āyatullāh Sayyid Muhammad Ĥusain Ťabā’ťabā’ī. Muťahharī participated in both Ťabāťabā’ī’s classes on the Shifā` of Abū `Alī Sīnā from ۱۹۵۰ to ۱۹۵۳, and the .Thursday evening meetings that took place under his direction

The subject of these meetings was materialist philosophy, a remarkable choice for a group of traditional scholars. Muťahharī himself had first conceived a critical interest in materialist philosophy, especially Marxism, soon after embarking on the formal .study of the rational sciences

According to his own recollections, in about ۱۹۴۶ he began to study the Persian translations of Marxist literature published by the Tudeh party, the major Marxist .organization in Iran and at that time an important force in the political scene

In addition, he read the writings of Taqī Arānī, the main theoretician of the Tudeh .party, as well as Marxist publications in `Arabic emanating from Egypt

At first he had some difficulty understanding these texts because he was not acquainted with modern philosophical terminology, but with continued exertion (which included the drawing up of a synopsis of Georges Pulitzer’s Elementary Principles of Philosophy), he came to master the whole subject of materialist .philosophy

This mastery made him an important contributor to Ťabā’ťabāī’s circle and later, after his move to Tehran, an effective combatant in the ideological war against Marxism .and Marxist-influenced interpretations of Islām

Numerous refutations of Marxism have been essayed in the Islāmic world, both in Iran and elsewhere, but almost all of them fail to go beyond the obvious incompatibilities of Marxism with

.religious belief and the political failures and inconsistencies of Marxist political parties

Mut'ahharī, by contrast, went to the philosophical roots of the matter and demonstrated with rigorous logic the contradictory and arbitrarily hypothetic nature of key principles of Marxism. His polemical writings are characterized more by .intellectual than rhetorical or emotional force

However, for Mut'ahharī, philosophy was far more than a polemical tool or intellectual discipline; it was a particular style of religiosity, a way of understanding and formulating Islām. Mut'ahharī belongs, in fact, to the tradition of Shī`a philosophical concern that goes back at least as far as Nasīr ad-Dīn Ťuŝī, one of Mut'ahharī's .personal heroes

To say that Mut'ahharī's view of Islām was philosophical is not to imply that he lacked spirituality or was determined to subordinate revealed dogma to philosophical interpretation and to impose philosophical terminology on all domains of religious ,concern

Rather it means that he viewed the attainment of knowledge and understanding as the prime goal and benefit of religion and for that reason assigned to philosophy a .certain primacy among the disciplines cultivated in the religious institution

In this he was at variance with those numerous scholars for whom Fiqh was the be-all and end-all of the curriculum, with modernists for whom philosophy represented a Hellenistic intrusion into the world of Islām, and with all those whom revolutionary (ardour had made impatient with careful philosophical thought.(١

The particular school of philosophy to which Mut'ahharī adhered was that of Mullā Ŝadra, the "sublime philosophy" (hikmat-i muta`āliya) that seeks to

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١- The authoritative statement of this view was made by Sayyid Qutb in his Khasā'is al-Tasawwur al-Islāmī wa Muqawwimatuhu, Cairo, numerous editions, which was

.translated into Persian and had some influence on views toward philosophy

.combine the methods of spiritual insight with those of philosophical deduction

Muťahharī was a man of tranquil and serene disposition, both in his general comportment and in his writings. Even when engaged in polemics, he was invariably .courteous and usually refrained from emotive and ironical wording

But such was his devotion to Mullā Ŝadrā that he would passionately defend him even against slight or incidental criticism, and he chose for his first grandchild – as well as .for the publishing house in Qum that put out his books – the name Ŝadrā

Insofar as Ŝadrā's school of philosophy attempts to merge the methods of inward illumination and intellectual reflection, it is not surprising that it has been subject to varying interpretations on the part of those more inclined to one method than the .other

To judge from his writings, Muťahharī belonged to those for whom the intellectual dimension of Ŝadrā's school was predominant; there is little of the mystical or markedly spiritual tone found in other exponents of Ŝadrā's thought, perhaps because Muťahharī viewed his own inward experiences as irrelevant to the task of .instruction in which he was engaged or even as an intimate secret he should conceal

More likely, however, this predilection for the strictly philosophical dimension of the "sublime philosophy" was an expression of Muťahharī's own temperament and genius. In this respect, he differed profoundly from his great mentor, Āyatullāh Khumaynī, many of whose political pronouncements continue to be suffused with the language and concerns

.of mysticism and spirituality

In ۱۹۵۲, Mut'ahharī left Qum for Tehran, where he married the daughter of Āyatullāh Rūhānī and began teaching philosophy at the Madressah Marwi, one of the principal .institutions of religious learning in the capital

This was not the beginning of his teaching career, for already in Qum he had begun to teach certain subjects - logic, philosophy, theology, and Fiqh - while still a student .himself

But Mut'ahharī seems to have become progressively impatient with the somewhat restricted atmosphere of Qum, with the factionalism prevailing among some of the students and their teachers, and with their remoteness from the concerns of society. .His own future prospects in Qum were also uncertain

In Tehran, Mut'ahharī found a broader and more satisfying field of religious, educational, and ultimately political activity. In ۱۹۵۴, he was invited to teach philosophy at the Faculty of Theology and Islāmic Sciences of Tehran University, where he .taught for twenty-two years

First the regularization of his appointment and then his promotion to professor was delayed by the jealousy of mediocre colleagues and by political considerations (for .(Mut'ahharī's closeness to Āyatullāh Khumaynī was well known

But the presence of a figure such as Mut'ahharī in the secular university was significant and effective. Many men of Madressah background had come to teach in .the universities, and they were often of great erudition

However, almost without exception they had discarded an Islāmic worldview, together with their turbans and cloaks. Mut'ahharī, by contrast, came to the university as

an articulate and convinced exponent of Islāmic science and wisdom, almost as an envoy of the religious institution to the secularly educated. Numerous people responded to him, as the pedagogical powers he had first displayed in Qum now fully .unfolded

In addition to building his reputation as a popular and effective university lecturer, Mut'ahharī participated in the activities of the numerous professional Islāmic associations (anjumanhā) that had come into being under the supervision of Mahdī Bāzārgān and Āyatullāh Taleqānī, lecturing to their doctors, engineers, teachers and helping to coordinate their work. A number of Mut'ahharī's books in fact consist of the .revised transcripts of series of lectures delivered to the Islāmic associations

Mut'ahharī's wishes for a wider diffusion of religious knowledge in society and a more effective engagement of religious scholars in social affairs led him in ۱۹۶۰ to assume the leadership of a group of Tehran `Ulamā known as the Anjuman-e-Mahāna-yi Dīnī .("("The Monthly Religious Society

The members of this group, which included the late Āyatullāh Beheshtī, a fellow-student of Mut'ahharī in Qum, organized monthly public lectures designed simultaneously to demonstrate the relevance of Islām to contemporary concerns, .and to stimulate reformist thinking among the `Ulamā

The lectures were printed under the title of Guftār-e-Māh ("Discourse of the Month") and proved very popular, but the government banned them in March ۱۹۶۳ when .Āyatullāh Khumaynī began his public denunciation of the Pahlavī regime

A far more important venture in ۱۹۶۵ of the same kind was the foundation of the Ĥusayniya-e-Irshād, an

institution in north Tehran, designed to gain the allegiance of the secularly educated young to Islām. Mut'ahharī was among the members of the directing board; he also lectured at the Ĥusayniya-e-Irshād and edited and contributed to several of its .publications

The institution was able to draw huge crowds to its functions, but this success - which without doubt exceeded the hopes of the founders, was overshadowed by a number of internal problems. One such problem was the political context of the institution's activities, which gave rise to differing opinions on the opportuneness of going beyond .reformist lecturing to political confrontation

The spoken word plays in general a more effective and immediate role in promoting revolutionary change than the written word, and it would be possible to compose an anthology of key sermons, addresses, and lectures that have carried the Islāmic .Revolution of Iran forward

But the clarification of the ideological content of the revolution and its demarcation from opposing or competing schools of thought have necessarily depended on the written word, on the composition of works that expound Islāmic doctrine in .systematic form, with particular attention to contemporary problems and concerns

In this area, Mut'ahharī's contribution was unique in its volume and scope. Mut'ahharī wrote assiduously and continuously, from his student days in Qum up to ۱۹۷۹ the year .of his martyrdom

Much of his output was marked by the same philosophical tone and emphasis already noted, and he probably regarded as his most important work

Uŝūl-e-Falsafa wa Ravish-e-Ri'ālism ("The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism"), the record of Ťabāt'abāī's discourses to the Thursday evening circle in .Qum, supplemented with Mut'ahharī's comments

But he did not choose the topics of his books in accordance with personal interest or predilection, but with his perception of need; wherever a book was lacking on some .vital topic of contemporary Islāmic interest, Mut'ahharī sought to supply it

Single handily, he set about constructing the main elements of a contemporary Islāmic library. Books such as `Adl-e-Ilāhī ("Divine Justice"), Nizām-e-Ĥuquq-e-Zan dar Islām ("The System of Women's Rights in Islām"), Mas'ala-yi Ĥijāb ("The Question of the Veil"), Ashnā'i ba `Ulūm-e-Islāmī ("An Introduction to the Islāmic Sciences"), and Muqaddima bar Jahānbīnī-yi Islāmi ("An Introduction to the Worldview of Islām") were all intended to fill a need, to contribute to an accurate and systematic .understanding of Islām and the problems in the Islāmic society

These books may well come to be regarded as Mut'ahharī's most lasting and important contribution to the rebirth of Islāmic Iran, but his activity also had a political .dimension that admittedly subordinate, should not be overlooked

While a student and fledgling teacher in Qum, he had sought to instill political consciousness in his contemporaries and was particularly close to those among them who were members of the Fida'iyan-i Islām, the Militant Organization founded in ۱۹۴۵ .by Nawwab Safawī

The Qum headquarters of the Fida'iyan was the Madrasa-yi Fayziya, where Mut'ahharī himself resided, and he sought in

vain to prevent them from being removed from the Madressah by Āyatullāh Burūjerdī, who was resolutely set against all political confrontation with the Shah’s .regime

During the struggle for the nationalization of the Iranian Oil Industry, Mut′ahharī sympathized with the efforts of Āyatullāh Kāshānī and Dr. Muhammad Musaddiq, although he criticized the latter for his adherence to secular nationalism. After his move to Tehran, Mut′ahharī collaborated with the Freedom Movement of Bāzārgān .and Taleqānī, but never became one of the leading figures in the group

His first serious confrontation with the Shah’s regime came during the uprising of Khurdad ۱۵th, ۱۳۴۲/June ۶th, ۱۹۶۳, when he showed himself to be politically, as well as intellectually, a follower of Āyatullāh Khumaynī by distributing his declarations and urging support for him in the sermons he gave.(۱)

He was accordingly arrested and held for forty-three days. After his release, he participated actively in the various organizations that came into being to maintain the momentum that had been created by the uprising, most importantly the Association .(of Militant Religious Scholars (Jami`a yi Ruhāniyāt-e-Mubāriz

In November ۱۹۶۴, Āyatullāh Khumaynī entered on his fourteen years of exile, spent first in Turkey and then in Najaf, and throughout this period Mut′ahharī remained in .touch with Āyatullāh Khumaynī, both directly - by visits to Najaf - and indirectly

When the Islāmic Revolution approached its triumphant climax in the winter of ۱۹۷۸ and Āyatullāh Khumaynī left Najaf for Paris, Mut′ahharī was among those who travelled to Paris to

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۱- Muhahharī’s name comes ninth in a list of clerical detainees prepared by the military prosecutor’s office in June, ۱۹۶۳. See facsimile of the list in Dihnavi, Qiyam-e-Khunin-i ۱۵ Khurdad ۴۲ ba Rivāyat-e-Asnād, Tehran, ۱۳۶۰ Sh./۱۹۸۱, Page ۷۷.

meet and consult with him. His closeness to Āyatullāh Khumaynī was confirmed by his appointment to the Council of the Islāmic Revolution, the existence of which Āyatullāh .Khumaynī announced on January ۱۲th, ۱۹۷۹

Mut'ahharī's services to the Islāmic Revolution were brutally curtailed by his assassination on May ۱st, ۱۹۷۹. The murder was carried out by a group known as Furqān, which claimed to be the protagonists of a "progressive Islām," one freed from .the allegedly distorting influence of the religious scholars

Although Mut'ahharī appears to have been chairman of the Council of the Islāmic Revolution at the time of his assassination, it was as a thinker and a writer that he .was martyred

In ۱۹۷۲, Mut'ahharī published a book entitled `Illal-i Girayish ba Maddigarī ("Reasons for the Turn to Materialism"), an important work analyzing the historical background .of materialism in Europe and Iran

During the revolution, he wrote an introduction to the eighth edition of this book, attacking distortions of the thought of Ĥafiz and Hallaj that had become fashionable in some segments of Irānian society and refuting certain materialistic interpretations of .the Qur'ān

The source of the interpretations was the Furqān group, which sought to deny fundamental Qur'ānic concepts such as the divine transcendence and the reality of .the hereafter

As always in such cases, Mut'ahharī's tone was persuasive and solicitous, not angry or condemnatory, and he even invited a response from Furqān and other interested parties to comment on what he had written. Their only response was the

.gun

The threat to assassinate all who opposed them was already contained in the publications of Furqān, and after the publication of the new edition of ` Illal-e-Girayish .ba Maddigarī, Mut'ahharī apparently had some premonition of his martyrdom

According to the testimony of his son, Mujtabā, a kind of detachment from worldly concerns became visible in him; he augmented his nightly prayers and readings of the Qur'ān, and he once dreamed that he was in the presence of the Prophet (S), together . with Āyatullāh Khumaynī

On Tuesday, May ۱st, ۱۹۷۹ Mut'ahharī went to the house of Dr. Yadullāh Sahābī, in the company of other members of the Council of the Islāmic Revolution. At about ۱۰:۳۰ at night, he and another participant in the meeting, Engineer Katira`i, left Sahābī's .house

Walking by himself to an adjacent alley where the car that was to take him home was parked, Mut'ahharī suddenly heard an unknown voice call out to him. He looked around to see where the voice was coming from, and as he did, a bullet struck him in .the head, entering beneath the right earlobe and exiting above the left eyebrow

He died almost instantly, and although he was rushed to a nearby hospital, there was nothing that could be done but mourn for him. The body was left in the hospital the following day, and then on Thursday, amid widespread mourning, it was taken for funeral prayers first to Tehran University and then to Qum for burial, next to the grave of

.Shaykh `Abdul Karīm Hā'irī

Āyatullāh Khumaynī wept openly when Mut'ahharī was buried in Qum, and he described him as his "dear son," and as "the fruit of my life," and as "a part of my flesh." But in his eulogy Āyatullāh Khumaynī also pointed out that with the murder of Mut'ahharī neither his personality was diminished, nor was the course of the :revolution interrupted

Let the evil-wishers know that with the departure of Mut'ahharī - his Islāmic" personality, his philosophy and learning, have not left us. Assassinations cannot destroy the Islāmic personality of the great men of Islām...Islām grows through sacrifice and martyrdom of its cherished ones. From the time of its revelation up to the present time, Islām has always been accompanied by martyrdom and heroism."(١)

The personage and legacy of Āyatullāh Mut'ahharī have certainly remained unforgotten in the Islāmic Republic, to such a degree that his posthumous presence has been almost as impressive as the attainments of his life. The anniversary of his martyrdom is regularly commemorated, and his portrait is ubiquitous throughout .Iran

Many of his unpublished writings are being printed for the first time, and the whole corpus of his work is now being distributed and studied on a massive scale. In the words of Āyatullāh Khamene'ī, President of the Republic, the works of Mut'ahharī ".have come to constitute "the intellectual infrastructure of the Islāmic Republic

Efforts are accordingly under way to promote a knowledge of Mut'ahharī's writings ,outside the Persian-speaking world as well

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١ - Text of Āyatullāh Khumaynī's eulogy in Yādnama-yi Ustād-i Shahīd Murtadha .Muhahharī, pp. ٣-٥

and the Ministry of Islāmic Guidance has sponsored translations of his works into .languages as diverse as Spanish and Malay

In a sense, however, it will be the most fitting memorial to Mut'ahharī if revolutionary Iran proves able to construct a polity, society, economy and culture that are authentically and integrally Islāmic. For Mut'ahharī's life was oriented to a goal that transcended individual motivation, and his martyrdom was the final expression of that .effacement of self

Good Deeds of Non-Muslims

Outline of the Discussion

point

One of the issues which is discussed regarding "Divine justice" is the issue of the good .deeds performed by non-Muslims

Today, the issue of whether the good deeds of non-Muslims are accepted by God or not is under discussion amongst the different classes - whether learned or unlearned, literate or illiterate. If they are accepted, what difference does it make if a person is a .Muslim or not; the important thing is to do good in this world

If a person is not a Muslim and practices no religion, he or she has lost nothing. And if their actions are not acceptable and are altogether void with no reward or ?recompense from God, then how is that compatible with Divine justice

This same question can be asked from a Shī`a perspective within the bounds of Islām: Are the actions of a non-Shī`a Muslim acceptable to God, or are they null and void? If they are acceptable, what difference does it make if a person is a Shī`a Muslim or a non-Shī`a

?Muslim

What is important is to be Muslim; a person who is not a Shī`a and doesn’t believe in the wilāyah (Divinely-appointed guardianship) of the Ahlul Baīt (as) has not lost anything. And if the actions of such a person are not acceptable to God, then how is ?that compatible with Divine justice

In the past, this issue was only discussed by philosophers and in the books of philosophy. However, today it has entered into the minds of all levels of society; few people can be found who have not at least broached the subject for themselves and .in their own minds

Divine philosophers would discuss the issue from the aspect that if all people who are outside the fold of religion are to face perdition and Divine punishment, it necessarily follows that in the universe, evil and compulsion are preponderant. However, the fact that felicity and good have primacy in the universe not evil and wretchedness is an .accepted and definitive principle

Humanity is the greatest of all of creation; everything else has been created for it (of course, with the correct conception of this idea that is understood by the wise, not the .(perception that the short-sighted people commonly possess

If humanity itself is to be created for the Hell-fire – that is, if the final abode of the majority of humanity is to be Hell then one must grant that the anger of God .supersedes His mercy

This is because the majority of people are strangers to the true

religion; and even those who are within the fold of the true religion are beset by deviation and digression when it comes to practicing.This was the background of the .discussion amongst the philosophers

It has been nearly half a century that, as a result of easier communication among Muslim and non-Muslim nations, an increase in the means of communication, and greater interaction amongst nations, the issue of whether being a Muslim and a believer as a necessary condition for the acceptability of good deeds is being .discussed among all levels of society, especially the so-called intellectuals

When these people study the lives of inventors and scientists of recent times who were not Muslim but who performed valuable services for humanity, they find such .people worthy of reward

On the other hand since they used to think that the actions of non-Muslims are altogether null and void, they fall into serious doubt and uncertainty. In this way, an issue which for years was the exclusive domain of the philosophers has entered the general conversations of people and has taken the form of an objection with regard .to Divine justice

Of course, this objection is not directly related to Divine justice; it is related to Islām's viewpoint about human beings and their actions, and becomes related to Divine justice inasmuch as it appears that such a viewpoint regarding human beings, their .actions, and God's dealing with them is in opposition to the standards of Divine justice

In the interactions that I have and have

had with students and the youth, I have frequently been faced with this question. Sometimes they ask whether the great inventors and scientists, with all the worthy .services which they have done for humanity, will go to Hell

Will the likes of Pasteur and Edison go to Hell while indolent holy people who have spent their lives idly in a corner of the Masjid go to Heaven? Has God created Heaven ?solely for us Shī`as

I remember that once an acquaintance from my city, who was a practicing Muslim, .came to Tehran to visit me, and he raised this issue

This man had visited a lepers' hospital in Mashhad and had been stirred and deeply affected by the sight of the Christian nurses who were sincerely (at least in his view) looking after the patients with leprosy. At that time, this issue came up in his mind and .he fell into doubt

You are aware that looking after a patient of leprosy is a very difficult and unpleasant task and when this hospital was established in Mashhad, very few doctors were .willing to serve there, and similarly, no one was willing to care for the patients

Advertisements for the employment of nurses were taken out in the newspapers; in all of Iran, not a single person gave a positive answer to this invitation. A small group of so-called ascetic Christian women from France came and took charge of nursing .the lepers

This man, who had seen the humanitarianism and loving care of

those nurses towards lepers, who had been abandoned by even their own parents, .had been strongly affected by these nurses

He related that the Christian nurses wore long, loose clothes, and apart from their face and hands, no part of their body was visible. Each of them had a long rosary which had perhaps a thousand beads and whenever they would find free time from .work, they would busy themselves in their recitations on the rosary

Then the man asked with a troubled mind and in a disturbed tone whether it was true ?that non-Muslims would not enter Heaven

Of course, right now we are not concerned with the motives of those Christian ladies. Was it truly for God, in God's way, and out of pure humanitarianism that they did what ?they did, or was another motive in play

Certainly, we don't want to be pessimistic, just as we are not overly optimistic; our point is that these incidents and events have introduced our people to a serious .question

Several years ago, I was invited to an association to give a speech. In that association, in accordance with their tradition, the participants were requested to write down any questions they had so that they could be answered at the appropriate .time

Those questions had been recorded in a notebook, and that notebook had been given to me so I could choose the topic of my speech from amongst those topics (noted in .(the book

I noticed that the question that had been repeated more

than any other was whether God will send all non-Muslims to Hell. Will Pasteur, ?Edison, and Kokh be amongst those who will be punished in the Hereafter

It was from that time that I realized the importance of this issue inasmuch as it had attracted people's thoughts.Now, in this part of the book, we will discuss this issue. But before we begin, we need to clarify two points in order for the topic at hand to .become completely clear

The General Aspect of the Discussion .۱

The purpose of this discussion is not to clarify the status of individuals, for example to specify whether Pasteur will go to Heaven or Hell. What do we know about his true thoughts and beliefs? What were his true intentions? What were his personal and moral traits; and in fact what was the sum of all his actions? Our familiarity with him is .limited to his intellectual services, and that is all

This doesn't apply only to Pasteur. As a matter of principle, the status of individuals is in the hands of God; no one has the right to express an opinion with certainty about whether someone will go to Heaven or Hell. If we were to be asked, "Is Shaykh Murtadhā al-Anŝārī , in view of his known asceticism, piety, faith, and deeds, definitely "?among the inhabitants of Heaven

Our answer would be, "From what we know of the man, in his intellectual and practical affairs we haven't heard of anything bad. What we know

of him is virtue and goodness. But as to say with absolute certainty whether he will go .to Heaven or Hell, that isn't our prerogative

It is God who knows the intentions of all people, and He knows the secrets and hidden things of all souls; and the account of all people's actions is also with Him. We can only speak with certainty about those whose final outcome has been made known by the ".religious authorities

Sometimes people discuss and debate amongst themselves about who was the most virtuous and excellent among the `Ulamā (scholars) in terms of nearness to God. For example, was it Sayyid Ibn Ťāwūs , or Sayyid Bahrul `Ulūm ? Or Shaykh al-Anŝārī ? Or .sometimes they ask about the most eminent among the descendents of the A'immah

For example, is Sayyid `Abdul `Adhīm al-Hasanīī (as) is superior in God's view, or ?(Sayyidah Fāt'imah al-Ma`ŝūmah (as

Once, one of the Mujtahids was asked whether `Abbās Ibn `Alī (as) was superior or `Alī al-Akbar (as). In order to give the question the form of a practical issue so the Mujtahid would be compelled to answer it, they asked, "If someone vows to sacrifice a sheep for the most superior of the Imāms' descendents, what is his duty? Is `Abbās "?Ibn `Alī superior, or `Alī al-Akbar

It is obvious that such discussions are improper, and answering such questions is neither the duty of a Faqīh (scholar of Islāmic law), nor of anyone else. Specifying

the rank of God’s creation is not our responsibility. It should be left to God, and no one has any knowledge about the matter except through God himself.

In the early era of Islām, there were instances when people expressed such unjustified opinions, and the Prophet Muhammad (S) forbade them from doing so.

When `Uthmān Ibn Ma`zūn died, a woman of the Anŝār named Umme `Alī, who apparently was the wife of the man in whose house `Uthmān Ibn Ma`zūn was staying and whose guest he was, addressed his bier in the presence of the Prophet Muhammad (S) and said:

هَنِيئاً لَکَ الْجَنَّهُ

“May Heaven be pleasant for you!”

Although `Uthmān Ibn Ma`zūn was an eminent man, and the Prophet Muhammad (S) cried heavily at his funeral and threw himself over the bier and kissed him, the inappropriate statement of that woman displeased him.

He turned to her and with an unhappy look said, “How did you know? Why did you make a statement out of ignorance? Have you received a revelation, or do you know the accounts of God’s creation?”

The woman replied, “O Messenger of God, he was your companion and a brave warrior!” The Noble Messenger (S) answered her with interesting words that are worthy of attention, he said:

إِنِّی رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ وَمَا أَدْرِی مَا یُفْعَلُ بِـــــی

“I am the Messenger of God, yet I don’t know what will be done with me.”(۱)

This sentence is the exact purport of a verse of the Qur’ān:

قُلْ مُــا کُنْتُ بِدْعاً مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ

Usd al-Ghāba, under `Uthmān ibn Maz`ūn -١

وَ مٰا أَدْرِی مٰا یُفْعَلُ بِی وَ لاٰ بِکَمْ

Say, 'I am not a novelty among the apostles, nor do I know what will be done with" (me, or with you."(1) (2)

A similar incident has also been related regarding the death of Sa`d Ibn Mu`ādh. In that instance, when the mother of Sa`d said a similar sentence over his coffin, the Messenger (S) said to her, "Be silent; don't make a decision with certainty in God's (affairs."(3)

No Religion Except Al–Islām is Accepted .2

The other point that must be made clear before beginning the discussion is that the topic of the non-Muslims' good deeds can be discussed in two ways and in reality, is :two discussions

First, is any religion other than Islām acceptable to God, or is Islām the only acceptable religion? That is, is it necessary only for a person to have some religion or at most follow a religion associated with one of the Divine prophets, without it then making a difference which religion that is, for example, whether one be a Muslim, ?Christian, Jew, or even a Zoroastrian? Or is there only one true religion in each era

After we have accepted that the true religion in each era is only one, the other discussion is whether a person who doesn't follow the true religion but performs a good deed, one that is actually good and is also sanctioned by the true religion, is worthy of reward or not? In other words, is faith in the true religion a condition for one's

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1- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Ahqāf (46), Verse 9

2- The objection may come to mind that the purport of this verse is contrary to what is accepted by Muslims as established fact, meaning that the Prophet (S) was informed of his praiseworthy place on the Day of Judgement and of his intercession for various sinners, and is rather contrary to the purport of various verses, like "And verily your

Lord will grant you until you are pleased" (Sūratul Duhā (٣٩), Verse ٥) and "For God to forgive that which has passed of your mistake and that which is to come." (Sūratul Fatĥ (۴٩), Verse ٢) The answer is that the purport of the verse, as is also understood from the preceding tradition, is that the end result of a person's actions are not known with certainty by anyone; only God has certain knowledge of the final result, and if others come to know, it is only by Divine revelation. So the verse that negates knowledge of the final end relates to the Prophet Muhammad (S) or someone else making a forecast relying on his or her own actions; and the verses that indicate that the Prophet Muhammad (S) has knowledge of his own or other people's final end are .through Divine revelation

Bihārul Anwār, Volume ٣, Page ١۶۵ -٣

?good deeds to merit reward

What will be discussed here is the second issue

With respect to the first issue, we can say briefly that there is only one true religion in .each era, and all are obligated to believe in it

The idea that has recently become common among some so-called intellectuals to .the effect that all Divine religions have equal validity in all eras is a fallacious one

Of course, it is true that there is no disagreement or contradiction among the prophets of God. All of the prophets of God call towards a single goal and the same God. They have not come to create mutually contradicting groups and sects among .humanity

But this doesn't mean that in every era there are several true religions, and thus .people in each era can then choose whichever religion they want

To the contrary, it means that a person must believe in all of the Prophets and affirm that each Prophet would give tidings of the Prophet to come, especially the final and .greatest of them; and likewise, each Prophet would affirm the previous one

Thus, the necessary consequence of believing in all of the Prophets is to submit in every era to the religion of the Prophet of the time. And of course, it is necessary that in the final era we act on the final commands that have been revealed by God to the final Prophet. And this is what necessarily follows from Islām, that is, submission to .God and acceptance of the missions of His Messengers

Many people in

our day have subscribed to the view that it is sufficient for a person to worship God and be affiliated with and practice one of the Divine religions that was revealed by .God; the form of the commandments is not that important

Isa (Jesus) (as) was a Prophet, Muhammad (S) was also a Prophet; if we follow the` religion of `Isa (as) and go to church once a week, that is fine, and if we follow the religion of the final Messenger (S) and pray five times a day, that is also correct. These people say that what is important is for a person to believe in God and practice one of .the Divine religions

George Jordac, author of the book, Imām `Alī; Gibrān Khalīl Gibrān, the well-known Lebanese Christian author; and others like them have such a view.(۱) These two individuals speak of the Prophet Muhammad (S) and Amīrul Mo'minīn `Alī Ibn Abī Ťālib .(as) and especially Amīrul Mo'minīn (as) – just as a Muslim would

Some people ask how these people, in spite of their belief in Amīrul Mo'minīn `Alī Ibn .Abī Ťalib (as) and the Prophet Muhammad (S), are still Christian

If they were truthful, they would have become Muslims, and since they haven't done so, it is clear there is something behind the curtain. They are being deceptive, and they aren't sincere in their expression of love and belief in the Prophet Muhammad (S) .(and `Alī Ibn Abī Ťālib (as

The answer is that they are not without sincerity

۱- George Jordac's words about the Prophet Muhmmad (S) indicate he believed in his prophecy and receiving Divine revelation, and he also believed firmly that `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib was a man of God and regarded him as being like `Īsā , but at the same time he did not abandon Christianity. Gibrān Khalīl Gibrān says of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) وَ فی عقیدت_ی أن علی بن أب_ی طالب أول عربی جاو وَ الروح الکلیه وَ سمارها "In my view, `Alī was the first Arab to have contact with and converse with the universal soul [of the world]." He expresses greater love for `Alī Ibn Abī Tālib aș than even the Prophet Muhammad (S).

He has unusual statements about `Alī; for example, he says: مَاتَ وَ الصَّلاةُ بَيْنَ شَفَتَيهِ "He died while prayer was between his two lips." And he also says of `Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib ạṣ, "`Alī was before his time, and I don't know the secret of why destiny sometimes brings people to the world before their time." Incidentally, this point is the meaning of one of `Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib's ạṣ own statements; he says: غَداً تَرَوْنَ أَيَّامِى وَ يَكْشِفُ لَكُمْ عَنْ سَرَائِرِى وَ تَعْرِفُونَنِى بَعْدَ خُلُوِّ مَكَانِى وَ قِيَامِ غَيْرِى مَقَامِى "Tomorrow you will see my days and my secrets will be exposed to you, and you will know me after my space has become empty and others take my place."

in their expression of love and belief in the Prophet Muhammad (S) and Amīrul Mo’minīn `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as). However, they have their own way of thinking .regarding practicing a religion

These individuals believe that human beings are not held to a particular religion; any religion is sufficient. Thus, at the same time that they are Christians, they consider themselves admirers and friends of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as), and they even believe that he himself held their view. George Jordac says, “`Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib declines to compel ”.people to necessarily follow a particular religion

:However, we consider this idea void. It is true that there is no compulsion in religion

لاٌ إِكْرٌاهَ فِى الدِّينِ

)There is no compulsion in religion.”(1)“

But this doesn’t mean that there is more than one religion in every age that is acceptable to God, and we have the right to choose any one we please. This is not the .case; in every age, there is one true religion and no more

Whenever a Prophet was sent by God with a new religion, the people were obligated to avail themselves of his teachings and learn his laws and commandments, whether .in acts of worship or otherwise, until the turn of the Seal of the Prophets came

In this (current) age, if someone wishes to come near God, he or she must seek .guidance from the precepts of the religion he brought

:The Noble Qur’ān says

وَ مَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الإِسْلاٌمَ دِيناً فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Baqarah (۲), Verse ۲۵۶ -۱

وَ هُوَ فِی الأخِرَهِ مِنَ الْخٰاسِرِینَ

And whoever desires a religion other than Islām, it shall never be accepted from him,“ (and in the hereafter he shall be among the losers.”(١)

If someone were to say that the meaning of “Islām” in this verse is not our religion in particular; rather, the intent is the literal meaning of the word, or submission to God, the answer would be that without doubt Islām means submission and the religion of Islām is the religion of submission, but the reality of submission has a particular form .in each age

And in this age, its form is the same cherished religion that was brought by the Seal of the Prophets. So it follows that the word Islām (submission) necessarily applies to it .alone

In other words, the necessary consequence of submission to God is to accept His commandments, and it is clear that one must always act on the final Divine commandments. And the final commandment of God is what His final messenger has .brought

Good Deeds Without Faith

point

It has become clear that, first of all, our discussion has a general aspect, and we don’t .want to pass decisions about individuals

Second, our discussion is not about whether the true religion is one or several; rather, .we have accepted that the true religion is one and that all are obligated to accept it

Third, our discussion is this: if a person, without accepting the true religion, performs a deed which the true religion considers good, does that person receive

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Āli Imrān (٣), Verse ٨۵ -١

?a reward for that good deed or not

For example, the true religion has emphasized doing good to others. This includes cultural services like establishing schools, places of learning, writing, and teaching; health services like medicine, nursing, establishing sanitary establishments, and so forth social services such as mediating disputes, helping the poor and disabled, supporting the rights of the exploited, fighting the exploiters and oppressors, assisting the deprived, establishing justice which is the aim and goal of the Prophets' mission, providing the means of satisfaction for the broken-hearted and misfortunate, and such like. Every religion and every Prophet has enjoined these things. In addition, the reasoning and conscience of each individual rules that these things are good and .worthy

Now, we ask whether a non-Muslim is rewarded if he or she performs such services. The true religion says to be trustworthy and not lie; if a non-Muslim acts in ?accordance with this principle, will he or she be rewarded or not

In other words, is it equal with respect to a non-Muslim to be trustworthy or treacherous? Are adultery and prayers equal with respect to him or her? This is the .issue that we wish to discuss

Two Ways of Thinking

Normally, those with an intellectual inclination say with certainty that there is no difference between a Muslim and non-Muslim, and even between a monotheist and non-monotheist; whoever performs a good deed, a service like establishing a charitable organization or an invention or something else, deserves recompense from .God

They say that God

is Just, and a God who is Just does not discriminate among His servants. What difference does it make for God whether His servant recognizes Him or not or believes in Him or not? Certainly, God will not ignore the good deeds or waste the reward of a person simply because that person doesn't have a relationship of .familiarity and love with Him

And even more certainly, if a person believes in God and does good deeds, but does not recognize His Messengers and thus does not have a relationship of familiarity and covenant of friendship with them, God will not cancel out and nullify his or her good .deeds

Directly opposite to these people are those who consider almost all people worthy of punishment and believe in a good end and accepted actions with respect to only a few. They have a very simple standard; they say that people are either Muslim or .non-Muslim

Non-Muslims, who are about three-fourths of the world's population, shall go to Hell because they are non-Muslims. The Muslims in their turn are either Shī`a or non-Shī`a. The non-Shī`as, who are about three-fourths of all Muslims, will go to Hell .because they are non-Shī`as

And of the Shī`as, too, a majority – about three-fourths – are only Shī`a in name, and it is a small minority that is familiar with even the first obligation, which is to perform "taqlīd" of a mujtahid (follow the religious rulings of a particular scholar), let alone their remaining

obligations, and the correctness and completeness of those obligations depends on .this obligation

And even those who perform taqlīd are for the most part non-practicing. Thus, there are very few who will achieve salvation.This is the logic of the two sides: the logic of those who, it can almost be said, are absolute conciliation, and the logic of those who .we can say are a manifestation of Divine anger, giving anger precedence over mercy

The Third Logic

Here there is a third logic, which is the logic of the Qur'ān. In this issue, the Qur'ān gives us a concept that is different from the previous two ideas and that is peculiar to it. The Qur'ān's view accords with neither the nonsensical idea of our so-called .intellectuals, nor with the narrow-mindedness of our holier-than-thou pious people

The Qur'ān's view is rooted in a special logic that everyone, after learning of it, will admit is the correct position in this matter. And this fact increases our faith in this astonishing and remarkable Book and shows that its lofty teachings are independent .of the worldly thoughts of human beings and have a celestial source

Here we present the proofs of both disputing groups (the so-called intellectuals and the so-called pious) and investigate them so that by critiquing them we can slowly arrive at the third logic in regard to this issue, that is, the logic and particular .philosophy of the Qur'ān

The So-Called Intellectuals

.This group brings two types of proofs for their view: rational and narrational

.Rational proof .۱

The rational demonstration that says that good deeds entail their reward no matter :who performs them is based on two premises

The first premise: God has an equal relation to all existent beings. His relation to all times and places is the same; just as God is in the East, He is in the West, and just as .He is above, He is below

God is in the present, past and future; the past, present, and future have no difference for God, just as above and below and East and West are the same for Him. Similarly His servants and creation are also the same for Him; He has neither family .ties nor a special relationship with anyone

Thus, God's showing grace or showing anger towards people is also the same, except (when there are differences in the people themselves.(١

As a result, no one is dear to God without reason, and no one is lowly or outcast without justification. God has neither ties of kinship nor of nationality with anyone; .and no one is the beloved or chosen one of God

Since God's relation to all beings is the same, there remains no reason for a good deed to be accepted from one person and not from another. If the actions are the same, their reward will also be the same, since the assumption is that God's relation to all people is the same. So justice demands that God reward all those who do good

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Of course, this does not mean that all things have the same relation to God and -١ deserve the same treatment. The relation of things to God is not the same, but the relation of God to things is the same. God is equally close to all things, but things are different in their closeness and distance from God. There is an interesting sentence in In this sentence, God has أَلَّذِی بَعُدَ فَلاٌ یُری، وَقَرُبَ فَشَهِدَ النَّجْوی :Du`ā al-Iftitāh in this regard been described thus: "Who is distant and thus cannot be seen, and Who is near and thus witnesses all conversations." In fact, it is we who are far from Him, while He is close to us. This is an enigma; how is it possible for two things to have a different

relation with each other in terms of closeness and distance? But yes, such is the case here; God is close to things, but things are not close to God – that is, they have varying states of closeness and distance. The interesting point in this sentence is that when it describes God as being “far,” it mentions an attribute of His creations as evidence, which is the attribute of sight: “None can see Him.” And when it describes God as being “near,” it mentions an attribute of God as evidence, which is the attribute of Divine presence and awareness. When speaking of our state, we use the attribute of “distance” for God, and when speaking of His state, we use the attribute of “closeness.” Sa`dī says: یار نزدیکتر از من به من استو این عجبتر که من از وی دورمچه کنم با که توان گفت که دوستدر کنار من و من مهجورم “He is a Friend closer to me than myself, and amazing it is that I am far from Him. What to do; who can I tell that the Friend is by my side, and I am forsaken!”

.whether Muslims or non-Muslims in the same way

The second premise: The goodness or badness of actions is not based on convention, but on actual reality. In the terminology of scholars of theology and the science of principles of jurisprudence, the "goodness" or "badness" of actions is innate.

That is, good and bad deeds are differentiated by their essence; good deeds are good by their essence, and bad deeds are bad by their essence. Honesty, virtue, doing good, helping others, and so forth are good by their essence and lying, stealing, and oppression are bad by their essence.

The goodness of "honesty" or badness of "lying" is not because God has mandated the former and forbidden the latter. To the contrary, it is because "honesty" is good that God has obligated it and because "lying" is bad that God has forbidden it. In short, God's commanding or forbidding is based on the goodness or badness of actions in their essence, and not the other way around.

From these two premises, we conclude that since God does not discriminate, and since good deeds are good from all people, whoever does a good deed will definitely and necessarily be rewarded by God.

It is exactly the same way with regard to evil deeds since there is no difference between those who commit them.

۲. Narrational proof. The Qur'ān affirms in many verses the principle of non-discrimination among people in rewarding good deeds and punishing evil deeds – which was mentioned in

.the above rational proof

The Qur’ān strongly opposed the Jews, who believed in such discrimination. The Jews believed and still believe that the Jewish race is chosen by God; they would say, “We are the sons and friends of God. Supposing God sends us to Hell, it will not be for more ”.than a limited time

a) The Qur’ān calls such ideas wishes and untrue thoughts and has strongly combated them.The Qur’ān also points out the error of Muslims who have fallen prey to such :deception. Here are some of the verses in this regard

وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلاَّ أَيَّاماً مَّعْدُودَةً قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ بَلَى مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيـئَتُهُ فَأُوْلَـئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُون وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَـئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

And they said, the Fire shall not touch us except for (a few) numbered days. Say: have“ you taken a covenant with God, for God shall not violate His covenant, or do you attribute to God that which you don’t know? Nay, those who earn evil and whose mistakes have enveloped them are the inhabitants of the Fire; they shall abide therein forever. And those who believe and do good are the inhabitants of Paradise; (they shall abide therein forever.”(١

:b) In another place, the Qur’ān says in answer to the conjecture of the Jews

وَغَرَّهُمْ فِى دِينِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ فَــــكَيْفَ إِذَا

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Baqarah (٢), Verses ٨٠-٨٢ -١

جَمَعْنَاهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لاَّ رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لاَ يُظْلَمُونَ

And their forgeries deceived them in their religion. So how will they be when We" gather them for a day in which there is no doubt and every soul shall be given in full (what it has earned; and they shall not be wronged."(١)

c) In another place, the Christians have been added to the Jews, and together they :have been opposed by the Qur'ān

وَقَـالُوا لَنْ يَـدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلاَّ مَنْ كَـانَ هُوداً أَوْ نَصَـارَى تِلْـكَ أَمَـانِيُّـهُمْ قُـلْ هَـاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُم إِنْ كُنْـتُمْ صَادِقِينَ بَلَى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّـهِ وَلاَ خَوْفٌ عَلَـيْهِمْ وَلاَ هُـمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

And they said, None shall enter Paradise except those who are Jews or Christians;" this is their fancy. Say: bring your proof, if you are truthful. Rather, those who submit themselves to God and do good shall have their reward with their Lord; and they shall (have no fear, nor shall they grieve."(٢)

d) In Sūratul Nisā, the Muslims too, have been added to the Jews and Christians. The Qur'ān demolishes discriminatory thinking no matter who it is from. It is as though the Muslims had come under the effect of the thinking of the People of the Book, and in the face of they who without reason considered themselves superior, adopted such :an opinion about themselves. The Qur'ān says, refuting these immature fancies

لَّيْسَ بِأَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلاَ أَمَانِيِّ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا

Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Āli Imrān (٣), Verses ٢۴-٢۵ -١

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Baqarah (٢), Verses ١١١-١١٢ -٢

يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلاَ يَجِدْ لَهُ مِـنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلاَ نَصِـيرًا وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُوْلَـئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّهَ وَلاَ يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيـرًا

This) shall not be in accordance with your vain desires nor in accordance with the)" vain desires of the followers of the Book. Whoever does evil, he shall be requited with it. He will find for himself neither a guardian nor a helper other than God. And whoever does good deeds whether male or female and he (or she) is a believer, it is these who shall enter paradise and they will not be wronged (so much as) the speck on a date (stone."(1)

e) Leaving aside the verses that condemn baseless suppositions of honour and nearness to God, there are other verses that say that God does not waste the reward .of any good deed

These verses have also been taken as proof of the acceptance of the good deeds of :all people, whether Muslim or non-Muslim. In Sūratul Zilzāl, we read

فَـمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّهٍ خَيْراً يَرَهُ وَ مَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّهٍ شَرّاً يَرَهُ

So whoever does an atom's weight of good shall see it, and whoever does an atom's" (weight of evil shall see it."(2)

:Elsewhere, God says

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

(Verily God does not waste the reward of those who do good."(3"

:And in another place, He says

إِنَّا لاَ نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلاً

(Verily We do not waste the reward of those who do good."(4"

The

۱- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Nisā (۴), Verses ۱۲۳-۱۲۴

۲- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Zilzāl (۹۹), Verses ۷-۸

۳- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Tawbah (۹), Verse ۱۲۰

۴- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Kahf (۱۸), Verse ۳۰

wording of these verses makes them universal statements that are not given to .exceptions

The scholars of the discipline of the principles of jurisprudence (Uŝūlul Fiqh) say that certain universal statements do not accept exceptions; that is, the wording and tone .of the universal statement is such that it resists any exceptions

When it is said, “We don’t waste the reward of the doer of good,” it means that God’s divinity demands that He preserve good deeds; thus it is impossible for God to .disregard His divinity in one instance and waste a good deed

f) There is another verse which is frequently referred to in this discussion, and it is :said that it clearly points to the assertion of this group

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِؤُونَ وَالنَّصَارَى مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلاَ خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

Indeed the faithful, the Jews, the Sabaeans, and the Christians—those who have“ faith in God and the Last Day and act righteously—they will have no fear, nor will they (grieve.”(1

In this verse, three conditions have been mentioned for salvation and safety from God’s punishment: belief in God, belief in the Day of Judgement, and good deeds; no .other condition is mentioned

Some who are apparently intellectuals have gone one step further and said that the aim of the Prophets was to call towards justice and goodness, and in accordance with the rule “Comply with the spirit and not the letter of the law” we should say that justice and goodness are accepted even

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Mā'idah (۵), Verse ۶۹ -۱

.from those who don't believe in God and the Day of Judgement

Thus, those who don't believe in God and the Day of Judgement but have made great cultural, medical, economical, or political contributions to humanity shall have a great :reward.Of course, these people can argue on the basis of verses like

إِنَّا لاٌ نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلاً

:We don't waste the reward of one who does good," and"

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْراً يَرَهُ

",So whoever does an atom's weight of good shall see it"

but verses like the one above contradict their assertion. Below we take a look at the .proofs of the other group

The Rigid Group

In opposition to the supposed intellectuals who claim that good deeds are accepted by God from all people in all situations are the "rigid pious ones"; their position is .directly opposite to the former group

They say that it is impossible for a non-Muslim's actions to be accepted. The actions of unbelievers and similarly those of non-Shī`a Muslims have absolutely no value. The non-Muslim and non-Shī`a Muslim himself is rejected and rebuffed; his actions are even more worthy of being rejected. This group also brings two proofs: rational and .narrated

Rational proof: The rational proof of this group is that if it is supposed that the actions of non-Muslims and non-Shī`a Muslims are to be accepted by God, what is the ?difference between Muslims and non-Muslims

The difference between them should be either for the good deeds of Muslims and Shī`as to be accepted to

the exclusion of non-Muslims and non-Shī`a Muslims, or for the evil deeds of Muslims and Shī`as not to be punished, again to the exclusion of non-Muslims and non-Shī`a .Muslims

But if we suppose that the good deeds of both groups entail reward and the evil deeds ?of both groups lead to punishment, what difference will there be between them

And what is the effect of being Muslim or Shī`a in such a case? The equality of Muslims and non-Muslims, and similarly Shī`as and non-Shī`as, in accounting for their actions means that in essence practicing Islām or Shī`aism is unnecessary and .without effect

Narrated proof: In addition to the above reasoning, this group also argues from two .Qur'ānic verses and several traditions

In a few verses of the Qur'ān, it has been clearly stated that the actions of unbelievers are not accepted; similarly, in many traditions it has been said that the actions of non-Shī`as – that is, those who do not have the wilāyah (Divinely-ordained .guardianship) of the Ahlul Bait (as) – are not accepted

In Sūrat Ibrāhīm, God compares the actions of unbelievers to ashes which are :scattered by a strong wind and lost

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ أَعْمَٰالُهُمْ كَرَمَٰادٍ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِى يَوْمٍ عَٰاصِفٍ لَّا يَقْدِرُونَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا عَلَى شَىْءٍ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ

A parable of those who defy their Lord: their deeds are like ashes over which the" wind blows hard on a tempestuous day: they have no power over anything they have earned. That

(is extreme error."(1)

In a verse of Sūratul Nūr, the actions of unbelievers have been likened to a mirage .which appears to be water but upon being approached, turns out to be nothing

This verse says that great deeds that give people pause and, in the view of some simpleminded people, are greater than the services of even the Prophets are all null and void if they are not coupled with belief in God. Their greatness is nothing but a :fancy, like a mirage. The words of the verse are as below

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ الظَّمْآنُ مَاءً حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا وَوَجَدَ اللَّهَ عِندَهُ فَوَفَّاهُ حِسَابَهُ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

As for the faithless, their works are like a mirage in a plain, which the thirsty man" supposes to be water. When he comes to it, he finds it to be nothing; but there he (finds God, who will pay him his full account, and God is swift at reckoning."(2)

This is the parable of the good deeds of unbelievers, which appear outwardly to be good. So woe upon their evil deeds! We read their parable in the following verse in :these words

أَوْ كَظُلُمَاتٍ فِي بَحْرٍ لُّجِّيٍّ يَغْشَاهُ مَوْجٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ مَوْجٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ سَحَابٌ ظُلُمَاتٌ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ إِذَا أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُ لَمْ يَكَدْ يَرَاهَا وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُوراً فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ

Or like the manifold darkness in a deep sea, covered by billow upon billow, overcast" [by clouds, manifold [layers of

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Ibrāhīm (۱۴), Verse ۱۸ -۱

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Nūr (۲۴), Verse ۳۰ -۲

darkness, one on the top of another: when he brings out his hand, he can hardly see it, (and one whom God has not granted any light has no light."(١)

By adding this verse to the previous verse, we deduce that the good deeds of unbelievers, with all their deceptive appearances, are a mirage that lacks reality. And !as for their evil deeds, alas! They are evil above evil, darkness upon darkness

.The above verses clarify the status of the deeds of unbelievers

As for non-Shī`a Muslims, from the point of view of us Shī`as, the traditions that have .reached us from the Ahlul Baīt (as) clarify their position

Many traditions have reached us on this topic. Those interested can refer to al-Kāfī, Volume ١, "Kitāb al-Ĥujjah," and Volume ٢, "Kitāb al-Īmān wa 'l-Kufr"; Wasā'ilush Shī`a, Volume ١, "Abwāb Muqaddamāt al-`Ibādāt"; Mustadrakul Wasā'il, Volume ١, "Abwāb Muqaddamāt al-`Ibādāt"; Bihārul Anwār, "Discussions about Resurrection," Chapter ١٧ (Chapter on the Promise, Threat, Invalidation of Actions, and Atonement), and Volume ٧ of the old print, Chapter ٢٢٧, and Volume ١٥ of the old print, section on :ethics, Page ١٨٧. As an example, we relate one tradition from Wasā'ilush Shī`a

Muhammad Ibn Muslim said, "I heard Imām Muhammad al-Bāqir (as) say, "Whoever worships God and tires himself in worship but doesn't recognize the Imām (leader) God has appointed for him, his deeds are not accepted, and he himself is astray and lost, and God abhors his actions... and if he dies in this state, he

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Al-Qur'ān Sūratul Nūr (٢٤), Verse ٤٠ -١

dies not in the state of Islām, but in a state of unbelief and hypocrisy. O Muhammad Ibn Muslim, know that the leaders of oppression and their followers are outside the religion of God. They themselves went astray, and they led others astray. Their actions are like ashes which are caught in a strong wind on a stormy day, and they cannot reach anything out of what they have earned. That is the distant deviation."(١)

.These are the proofs of those who say that the basis of salvation is faith and belief

Occasionally, some from this group go to extremes and consider simply the claim of having faith, or in reality a simple affiliation, to be the criterion of Judgement. For example, the Murjī`ī sect in the era of BanīūUmayyah propagated this idea, and .fortunately, with the decline of Banī Umayyah, they also ceased to exist

In that age, the Shī`a position, inspired by the Imāms from the Ahlul Baīt (as), was opposite to the Murjī` one, but unfortunately the Murjī`īs' view has lately taken hold .in new clothing among some of the common Shī`as

Some simpleminded Shī`as consider mere apparent affiliation with Amīrul Mo'minīn `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) to be sufficient for salvation, and this idea is the basic factor .behind the Shī`as' poor state in the modern era

The dervishes and Sufis of the recent era malign good deeds in a different way and under a different pretext; they have made the issue of goodness

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Wasā'ilush Shī`a, Volume ۱, Part ۱, Page ۹۰ -۱

of heart a pretext, even though true goodness of heart encourages and affirms deeds .rather than conflicting with them

As opposed to these groups, there are others who have raised the value of deeds to such a point that they say that one who commits a major sin is an unbeliever. Such a belief was held by the Khārijites. Some theologians considered the committer of major sins to be neither a believer nor unbeliever, and held that there is a "state ".(between the two states (of belief and unbelief

Our task is to see which of these positions is correct. Should we believe in the primacy ?of belief or the primacy of action? Or is there a third path

.To begin, let us discuss the value of belief and faith

Value of Belief

point

:With regard to the value of belief, the discussion should proceed in three stages

۱. Is lack of belief in the principles of religion, such as the Oneness of God, Prophecy, and resurrection – and according to the Shī`a view, these three in addition to Divine justice and Imāmate (succession) – always and necessarily cause for Divine punishment? Or is it possible for some unbelievers to be excused and not be punished ?for their unbelief

۲. Is belief a necessary condition for the acceptance of good deeds, such that no good ?deed of a non-Muslim or non-Shī`a is acceptable to God

۳. ?Do unbelief and rejection of the truth cause the invalidity of good deeds or not

In

.the coming discussions, we will touch on each of these three stages

Being Held Accountable For Unbelief

There is no doubt that unbelief is of two types: One is unbelief out of obstinacy and stubbornness, which is called the unbelief of repudiation; and the other is unbelief out .of ignorance and unawareness of the truth

With regard to the former, definitive rational and narrational proofs indicate that a person who deliberately and knowingly shows obstinacy towards the truth and .endeavours to reject, it deserves punishment

But with regard to the latter, it must be said that if the ignorance and unawareness do .not spring from negligence, they shall be forgiven and overlooked by God

To explain this point, it is necessary to speak a bit about submission and obstinacy. :The Qur’ān says

يَوْمَ لاَّ يَنْفَعُ مٌالٌ وَ لاٌ بَنُونَ إِلاَّ مَنْ أَتَـى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

The day when neither wealth nor children will avail, except him who comes to God“ (with a sound heart.”(۱

Levels of Submission

The most basic condition of soundness of heart is to be submissive to the truth. Submission has three levels: submission of the body, submission of the intellect, and .submission of the heart

When two opponents face each other in combat and one of them feels likely to lose, he may surrender or submit to the other. In such a surrender, normally the losing opponent puts his hands up as a sign of defeat and desists from fighting, coming under the sway of his opponent. That is, he acts in accordance with whatever command his

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Shu`arā (٢٦), Verses ٨٨-٨٩ -١

.opponent gives

In this type of submission, the body submits, but the mind and reason do not; instead, they are constantly thinking of rebellion, incessantly contemplating how to get a .chance to overcome the opponent once again

This is the state of his reason and thought, and as for his feelings and emotions, they too continuously denounce the enemy. This type of submission – that of the body – is .the most that can be achieved by force

The next level of submission is the submission of the intellect and reason. The power that can make the intellect submit is that of logic and reasoning. Here, physical force .can't accomplish anything

It is absolutely impossible through physical force to make a student understand that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles. Mathematical .propositions must be proven through reasoning and not through any other way

The intellect is forced to submit through thinking and reasoning. If sufficient proof exists and is presented to the intellect and the intellect understands it, it submits, .even if all the powers of the world say not to submit

It is well-known that when Galileo was tortured for his belief in the movement of the earth and centrality of the sun in the solar system, out of fear that they would burn him alive, he expressed repentance of his scientific view; in that condition, he wrote .something on the ground

It is said that he wrote, "Galileo's repentance will not make

".the Earth stand still

Force can compel a person to recant his or her words, but the human intellect does .not submit except when faced with logic and reasoning

قُلْ هٰـاتُوا بُرْهٰـنَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْـتُمْ صٰدِقِينَ

(Say, 'Produce your evidence, should you be truthful.'"(١"

The third level of submission is the submission of the heart. The reality of faith is submission of the heart; submission of the tongue or submission of the thought and intellect, if not coupled with submission of the heart, is not faith. Submission of the heart is equal to submission of the entire existence of a person and the negation of .every type of obstinacy and rejection

It is possible that someone may submit to an idea as far as the intellect and mind are concerned, but not the spirit. When a person shows obstinacy out of prejudice or refuses to yield to the truth because of personal interests, his or her mind and intellect have submitted, but the spirit is rebellious and lacks submission, and for this very .reason lacks faith, since the reality of faith is the submission of the heart and soul

:God says in the Qur'ān

يٰا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءٰامَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِى السِّلْمِ كٰـآفَةً وَ لاٰ تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوٰاتِ الشَّيْطٰانِ

O you who have faith! Enter into submission, all together, and do not follow in Satan's"
(steps."(٢

That is, your soul should not be at war with your intellect; your feelings should not be .at war with your perceptions

The story of Shaīt'ān (Satan) that has come in the

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Naml (٢٧), Verse ٦۴ -١

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Baqarah (٢), Verse ٢٠٨ -٢

Qur’ān is an example of unbelief of the heart, even though the intellect has submitted. Shaīt’ān recognized God, believed in the Day of Judgement, completely recognized the Prophets and their legatees and admitted their position; at the same time, God calls him an unbeliever and says of him:

وَ كَـانَ مِنَ الْكٌفِرِينَ

“And he was of the unbelievers.”(١)

The evidence that, in the view of the Qur’ān, Shaīt’ān recognized God is that the Qur’ān explicitly says that he confessed that He is the Creator. Addressing God, he said:

خَلَقْتَنِـى مِنْ نٌارٍ وَ خَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ

“You created me from fire, and You created him from clay.”(٢)

And the evidence that he believed in the Day of Judgement is that he said:

أُنْظُرْنِـى إِلـى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

“Grant me reprieve until the day they are resurrected.”(٣)

And the evidence that he recognized the Prophets and infallibles is that he said:

قٌالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأَغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ إِلاَّ عِبٌادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

“By Your might, I shall lead them all astray, except Your purified servants among them.”(۴)

The meaning of the purified servants, who are pure not just in their actions, but whose entire existence is purified and free of all except God, are the friends of God and the infallibles; Shaīt’ān recognized them, too, and believed in their infallibility.

The Qur’ān, while describing Shaīt’ān as knowing all these things, calls him an unbeliever. Thus, we come to know that mere recognition and knowledge, or the submission of the intellect and mind, is not sufficient for a person to be considered a

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Ibid., Verse ۳۴ -۱

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul A`rāf (۷), Verse ۱۲ -۲

Ibid., Verse ۱۴ -۳

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Sād (۳۸), Verses ۸۲-۸۳ -۴

.believer. Something else is necessary as well

In the Qur’ān’s logic, why has Shaīṭān been regarded as an unbeliever in spite of all ?his knowledge

Obviously, it is because while his perception accepted reality, his feelings rose to battle it; his heart rose against his intellect; he showed arrogance and refused to .accept the truth: he lacked submission of the heart

True Islām and Regional Islām

Normally when we say so-and-so is Muslim or isn’t Muslim, our view isn’t toward the reality of the matter. Those who geographically live in a particular region and are Muslims through imitation and inheritance from their parents we call Muslims and those who live under different conditions and are affiliated with another religion or have no religion altogether, again out of imitation of their parents, we call non-.Muslims

It should be known that this aspect does not have much value, neither the aspect of being a Muslim nor that of being a non-Muslim and an unbeliever. Many of us are imitative or geographical Muslims we are Muslims because our mothers and fathers were Muslim and we were born and raised in a region whose people are Muslim

That which has value in reality is true Islām, and that is for a person to submit to truth in the heart, having opened the door of one’s heart to the truth to accept and act on it, and the Islām that he or she has accepted should be based on research and study on the one hand, and submission and lack of prejudice

.on the other

If someone possesses the trait of submission to the truth and for whatever reason the reality of Islām has remained hidden from him or her without that person being at fault, God will most certainly refrain from punishing him or her; he or she shall achieve :salvation from Hell. God says

وَ مٰا كُنّٰا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَـتّٰى نَبْعَثَ رَسُولاً

(And We do not punish until We have sent a messenger."(١"

That is, it is impossible for God, the Wise and Munificent, to punish someone for whom .the proofs (of truth) have not been completed

The scholars of the principles of jurisprudence have termed the purport of this verse, which acts to confirm the dictate of reason, "the improperness of punishment without prior explanation." They say that until God has made clear a reality for a person, it is .unjust for Him to punish that person

To show the fact that it is possible to find individuals who possess the spirit of submission without being Muslims in name, Descartes, the French philosopher – .according to his own words – is a good example

In his biography, they have written that he began his philosophy from doubt; he doubted all that he knew and began from zero. He made his own thought a starting ".point and said, "I think, therefore I am

After proving his own existence, he proved the spirit, and likewise the existence of body, and God became definite for him. Gradually the issue of choosing a religion arose; he chose

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Bani Isrā'il (١٧), Verse ١٥ -١

.Christianity, which was the official religion of his country

But he also says, "I don't say that Christianity is definitely the best religion that exists in the entire world; what I say is that among the religions that I currently know and .that are in my reach, Christianity is the best religion

I have no conflict with the truth; perhaps there is a religion in other parts of the world that is superior to Christianity." Incidentally, he mentions Irans an example of a country about which he lacks information and doesn't know the religion of; he says: ".“What do I know? Perhaps there is a religion in Iran that is better than Christianity

Such people cannot be called unbelievers, since they have no obstinacy; they are not deliberately seeking unbelief. They are not involved in concealing reality, which is the ".essence of unbelief. Such people are "dispositional Muslims

Though they cannot be called Muslim, they also cannot be termed unbelievers, since the opposition between a Muslim and an unbeliever is not like the opposition between affirmation and negation or that between the existence and non-existence of a trait in a subject capable of possessing the trait (according to the terminology of logicians .(and philosophers

Instead, it is the opposition of two opposites; that is, it is the opposition of two .existential things, not that of one existential and one non-existential thing

Of course, the fact that we mentioned Descartes as an example was not to depart .from the basic principle we explained earlier

We stipulated from the beginning that we were not to express opinions about .individuals

Our intent in mentioning Descartes as an example is that if we suppose that what he said is true and he is as submissive to the truth as his words indicate, and on the other .hand truly did not have more ability to research, then he is a dispositional Muslim

Sincerity, the Condition for the Acceptance of Actions

The second of the issues that we raised regarding the value of faith is what influence .faith can have in the acceptance of actions

Previously, in relating the proofs of those who say that the good deeds of unbelievers are acceptable to God, we said that they say that the goodness and badness of .actions is related to their essence

A good deed, whether of a believer or an unbeliever, is good by its essence and must inevitably be accepted by God, since good is good no matter who does it and bad is .bad no matter who does it, and since God's relation to all people is the same

Now, we would like to add that though what has been said in the above reasoning is correct, a basic point has been neglected in it. To explain this point, we must first explain another term from the subject of the principles of jurisprudence, which is that .goodness and evil are of two types: action-related, and actor-related

Every action has two aspects, and every one of the two aspects has a separate ruling .with regard to goodness or badness

It is possible for an action to be good from one dimension and not be good from the other. Similarly, the reverse is possible; and it is also possible for an action to be good .or bad from both dimensions

The two dimensions consist of the action's beneficial or harmful effect in the external world and human society, and the action's association to its doer and that person's spiritual motivations which caused that action and the goal to which the doer aspired .by performing it

From the point of view of the former, one must determine the extent of the beneficial or harmful effect of the action. And from the point of view of the latter, one must determine what type of action the doer has performed in his or her mental and .spiritual framework and what goal he or she has pursued

Human actions, in terms of the trajectory of their beneficial and harmful effects, are recorded in books of history, and history passes Judgement about them; it praises them or condemns them. But the aspect of attribution to the human soul is only recorded in the otherworldly books [of human deeds]. Books of history like great and influential actions and praise such actions; but the Divine otherworldly and celestial .books, in addition to this aspect, are in search of actions that have spirit

:The Qur'ān says

الَّذِى خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَ الْحَيّاهَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلاً

Who created death and life to try you as to which of you is"

(the best in deeds."(1)

It refers to "the best deeds," not "the most deeds," since the important thing is for us to know that when we perform an action under the influence of spiritual motives, aside from the outward appearance of the action – which is a series of movements and has its own social effects and value – spiritually we actually move in a certain direction and traverse a certain path.

The issue is not so simple as to say, "All that exists is the 'action,' the work, the muscular energy that is spent. As for the thoughts and intentions, their value lies only in preparing for the action; they are no more than a mentality and preliminary.

And whatever the preliminary may be, the main thing is the action itself." To the contrary, the importance of the thought and the intention is not less than that of the action. Such a way of thinking, which maintains the primacy of action rather than the primacy of the intention and belief, is a materialistic thought.

Under the names "objectivity" and "subjectivity" it gives the belief and intention behind the action no more than preliminary value. Leaving aside the fact that the invalidity of this school is clear in its own right, what is certain is that the Qur'ānic teachings cannot be interpreted on the basis of such ways of thinking.

In the view of the Qur'ān, our true personality and self is our spirit. With every voluntary action, the spirit moves

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1- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Mulk (۶۷), Verse ۲

from potentiality to actuality and acquires an effect and an attribute commensurate to its own intention and aim. These effects and habits become a part of our personality and carry us to a world appropriate to themselves from among the realms .of existence

Thus, from the first dimension the goodness and evilness of actions depends on the external effect of those actions; and from the second dimension goodness and .evilness depends on the manner in which that action was performed by its doer

In the first case, our position about an action is based on its external and societal outcome; and in the second case, it is based on the internal and mental effect of the .action on its doer

If a person establishes a hospital or performs some other charitable deed with respect to the cultural, health, or economic affairs of a country, without doubt from a .societal point of view and in the view of history, that action is good

That is, it is an act that benefits God's creation. In this regard, it doesn't matter what the intention was of the person who established the hospital or other philanthropic .institution

Whether the intention is to show off and fulfil one's selfish instincts or whether the intention is altruistic and unselfish, from a societal point of view a charitable institution .has come into being

The ruling of history with regard to people's actions is always from this aspect and in view of this particular dimension. History has no concern with

people’s intentions. When the masterpieces of art or architecture in Isfahān are mentioned, no one is concerned with what intention or aim the maker of the Shaykh Lut'fullāh Masjid, the Shāh Masjid, or the Thirty-Three Bridge had; history sees the ”.outward form and calls the action a “good deed

However, in ascertaining an action’s actor-related goodness, our attention doesn’t go to the societal and external effect of the action. Instead, from this aspect, we are .concerned with how the action relates to its doer

In this reckoning, it is not enough for the action to be beneficial in order for it to be considered a “good deed.” What counts is what the doer’s intention was in performing the action, and what goal he or she wanted to attain. If the doer had a good intention and aim and performed the action with a good motive, that action is good that is, it .possesses actor-related goodness

The action itself is two-dimensional; that is, it proceeds in two dimensions: the historical and societal dimension, and the spiritual dimension. But if the doer performed the action to show off or to attract material benefit, the action is one-.dimensional

It goes forward only in time and in history, and not in the spiritual dimension; and in Islāmic terminology, the action does not ascend to the higher realm. In other words, in such instances, the doer has served society and raised its level but has not benefited him or herself, and may actually

have committed treachery. Instead of ascending spiritually by performing the action, .the doer's soul may have descended to a lower spiritual level

Of course, our intent is not that the action-related goodness of an action is totally separate from its actor-related goodness, and that from a spiritual point of view a .person should have nothing to do with actions that are beneficial to society

The intent is that a socially beneficial deed is only spiritually beneficial when the spirit, by performing that action, has travelled a spiritual path as well, having left the station .of selfishness and pleasure-seeking and set foot on the station of sincerity and purity

The relation between action-related goodness and actor-related goodness is the relation of the body to the spirit. A living being is a combination of spirit and body. Likewise, the second type of goodness must be breathed into the body of an action .possessing the first type of goodness for that action to come alive

Thus, the rational proof of the so-called intellectuals is fallacious. This proof states that "God's relationship with all His creatures is equal, and the goodness or evilness of .actions is innate to them. Thus good deeds are equal for all people

And the corollary of these two equalities is that in the hereafter, the recompense of believers and unbelievers shall be the same." In this reasoning, the actions and the equality of the creatures before the Creator have been given attention but the doer and his or her

personality, aim, motive, and spiritual path all of which necessarily cause actions to be dissimilar and cause a difference among them similar to the difference between the living and the dead has been forgotten.

They say, "What difference does it make for God whether the doer of a good deed recognizes Him or not, or is familiar with Him or not? Whether he or she performed the action for His pleasure or with some other purpose, whether the intention be seeking nearness to God or not?"

The answer is that it makes no difference to God, but it makes a difference for that person him or herself. If the person doesn't recognize God, he or she will perform one type of spiritual action and another type if he or she is familiar with God.

If one doesn't know God, one's action will be one-dimensional; the action will have only action-related and historical goodness. But if one knows God, one's action will be two-dimensional and will have actor-related and spiritual goodness.

If one knows God, one's action and one's self will ascend towards God, and if one doesn't know God one will not ascend. In other words, it makes no difference for God, but it does make a difference for the action. In one case, the action will be a living, ascending action, and in the other case it will be a dead, descending action.

They say that God, who is Wise and Just, will certainly not nullify the good

.deeds of a person on account of not having a relationship of friendship with Him

We too believe that God will not nullify them, but we must see whether a person who doesn't recognize God actually performs a good deed that is good both in its effect and its relation to its doer, good both from the aspect of the societal order as well as .from the doer's spiritual aspect

The fallacy arises because we have supposed that for an action to be beneficial to society suffices for it to be considered a "good deed." To suppose the impossible, if a person doesn't know God and yet ascends toward God through his or her action, .without doubt God will not send that person back

But reality is that a person who doesn't know God doesn't break the curtain to enter the spiritual realm, doesn't traverse any of the stations of the soul, and doesn't ascend towards God's spiritual realm in order for his or her action to acquire a spiritual aspect and a form that will be a source of pleasure, felicity, and salvation for .him or her

The acceptance of an action by God is nothing other than for the action to possess .these qualities

One of the primary differences between Divine laws and human laws is this very point; Divine laws are two-dimensional, and human laws are one-dimensional. Human laws have nothing to do with the spiritual order or spiritual advancement of .the individual

When a government legislates taxes in the

interests of the country, its goal is solely to obtain money and cover the country's .expenses. The government has no concern with the intention of the taxpayer

Does he or she pay taxes freely and willingly out of love for the country and its government, or out of fear? The government's purpose is only to obtain money; even if the taxpayer curses the government under his or her breath, the government's .purpose has been attained

Similarly, when a government calls its armed forces to defend the country, it does not concern itself with the intention of the soldiers; it desires the soldiers to fight its enemies in war. It makes no difference to the government whether the soldier fights out of his free will and inclination or out of fear of the gun to his head; or whether his fighting is to show off, as a result of foolish prejudices, or in defence of truth and what .is right

However, Divine laws are not like that. In these laws, monetary dues and warriors are not wanted in absolute terms, but together with a pure intention and desire to seek .nearness to God. Islām desires actions with a soul, not soulless actions

Thus, if a Muslim pays zakāt, but with an element of showing off, it is not accepted; if he performs jihād, but does it in order to show off, it is not accepted. The Divine law says that a coerced soldier is useless; I

:want a soldier who has the soul of a soldier, who has accepted the call

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْـــمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَ أَمْوَالَـــهُمْ بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّهَ

Verily God has purchased from the believers their souls and their belongings in return“ (for Paradise”(١

.and answered it sincerely

It has been related from the Messenger of Islām (S) in a consecutively-narrated :tradition among both the Sunnis and Shī`as that he said

إِنَّمَا الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

”.The value of deeds is based on the intention“

لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوى.

”.Every individual shall have what he or she intended“

لاَ عَمَلَ إِلاَّ بِنِيَّهِ

(No deed is accepted without an intention.”(٢“

:One tradition has been narrated in the following words

إِنَّمَا الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّهِ، وَإِنَّمَا لامْرِئَ مَا نَوى، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتَهُ إِلَــى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَــى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ امْرَأهٍ يَتَزَوَّجُهَا فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَــى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ.

The value of actions is in their intention, and a man shall only get that which he“ intended. So whoever migrated for the sake of God and His Messenger, his migration is towards God and His Messenger; and whoever migrated for the sake of worldly (wealth or a woman he wished to marry, his migration is towards that thing.”(٣

Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as) said, “Perform your actions for the sake of God and not people, because whatever is for God, (ascends) towards God, and ”.whatever is for the people, does not ascend towards God

The intention is the soul of the action, and just as the body of a human being is noble because of the

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۱- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Tawbah (۹), Verse ۱۱۱

۲- This and the previous two traditions are in Wasā'ilush Shī`a, Volume ۱, Page ۸.

۳- Sahīh al-Muslim, Volume ۶, Page ۴۸

.human soul, so too does the nobility of a human being's action depend on its soul

:What is the soul of an action? The soul of an action is sincerity. The Qur'ān says

وَ مٌـــآ أُمِرُوا إِلاَّ لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

Yet they were not commanded except to worship God, dedicating their faith to" (Him..."(١

?Quality or Quantity

From the above discussion, an interesting conclusion can be obtained which is that in .the reckoning of God, the value of actions is by their quality rather than their quantity

Inattention to this point has caused some people to make up fantastic stories regarding the extraordinarily valuable actions of holy personages when they see the .societal dimension of those actions to be insignificant

For example, with regard to the ring that Imām `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) bestowed on a beggar while bowing in prayer, about which a verse of the Qur'ān was revealed, they say that the value of that ring was equal to the revenue of greater Syria; and in order .for people to believe that, they gave it the form of a tradition

In the view of these people, it was hard to believe that a great verse of Qur'ān would be revealed about the bestowal of an insignificant ring. And since they were unable to .believe such a thing, they created a story and raised the ring's material value

They didn't stop to think that a ring equal in value to the revenue of all of Syria would

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Bayyinah ٨٩ Verse ٥ -١

not, in the poor and indigent city of Madīnah, be found on the finger of Imām `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as). Supposing such a ring was in Imām `Alī's Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) possession, he would not give it to just one beggar; instead, with such a ring he would make .Madīnah flourish and save all of the city's needy

The intellect of these fantasy-weavers hasn't understood that for God a great deed has a reckoning different from material reckonings. It is as if they have supposed that the value of the ring caught God's attention and compelled Him to praise `Alī Ibn Abī !Ťalib (as) for the great deed he did God be exalted from such suppositions

I don't know what these short-sighted people have thought up regarding the pieces of bread that `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) and his family bestowed in charity and about which Sūrah "Hal Ata"(۱) was revealed. Perhaps they will say that the flour of that bread was !not from barley, but from gold dust

But in fact that is not the case. The importance of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) and his family's action is not in the material aspect which attracts our attention; the importance of their action is that it was pure and entirely for God's sake; it was at a level of sincerity which it is beyond us even to conceive, a sincerity which was .reflected in the highest realm and elicited Divine praise and glorification

In the words of

۱- Sūratul Dahr – also known as Sūratul Insān (۷۶)

:Shaykh Farīud Dīn al-` At'ṭ'ar

گذشته ز آنجهان وصف سه نانش, گذشته زین جهان وصف سنانش

;It is beyond [the power] this world to describe his spear

.It is beyond that world to describe his three pieces of bread

:The importance of their action lies in what the Qur'ān has quoted

إِنَّـمَّا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لاَ نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزْآءً وَ لاَ شُكُوراً

We feed you only for God's sake; we wish from you no recompense, nor any" (gratitude."(١

These are the words of their heart which God, the Aware, has made known; that is, .with their selflessness and sacrifice, they desired from God naught but God Himself

The fact that the Qur'ān regards the actions of unbelievers to be like a mirage, hollow and devoid of reality, is because their actions have an adorned and misleading exterior, but since they are done for lowly material and individual motives and not for .God, they have no spiritual aspect

Zubayda, the wife of the Abbasid caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, caused a river to be dug in .Makkah which has been used by visitors of God's sanctuary from that time until today

This action has a very righteous exterior. The resolve of Zubayda caused this river to flow to barren Makkah from the rocky land between Ṫā'if and Makkah, and it has been close to twelve centuries that the hot, thirsty pilgrims have been making use of .it

From a worldly perspective, it is quite a great deed; but how about from the spiritual ?perspective? Do the Angels reckon as we do

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Dahr (۷۶), Verse ۹ -۱

?Is their attention, like ours, drawn to the apparent magnitude of this act

No, their reckoning is different. Using a Divine scale, they measure the other dimensions of the action. They take account of where Zubayda obtained the money .for this act

Zubayda was the wife of an oppressive and tyrannical man who had control of the public treasury of the Muslims and would do as he pleased. Zubayda had no money of her own, and she didn’t spend her own wealth in this charitable act; she spent the .people’s money on the people

The difference between her and other women in her position is that others would spend the public’s money on their personal desires, and she spent a portion of this money on a project for the public good. Now, what was Zubayda’s purpose in this action? Did she wish for her name to remain in history? Or did she truly have God’s .pleasure in mind? Only God knows

It is in this reckoning that it is said that someone saw Zubayda in a dream and asked her what God gave her for the river she caused to be made. She replied that God had .given the entire reward of that action to the original owners of that money

The Masjid of Bahlūl

It has been related that once a Masjid was being constructed when Bahlūl arrived and asked, “What are you doing?” They replied, “We are building a Masjid.” Bahlūl asked, ”?“What for

They replied, “What kind of question is that? We are building it for God.”

Bahlūl wanted to show the doers of that charitable work their level of sincerity. Secretly, he had a stone engraved with the words, “The Bahlūl Masjid,” and at night he affixed it above the Masjid’s main gate. When the builders of the Masjid came the next day and saw the sign, they became angry.

They found Bahlūl and beat him for portraying the toils of others as his own work. Bahlūl retorted, “But didn’t you say you built this Masjid for God? Suppose that people mistakenly think it was I who built it; God won’t make such a mistake!”

How many great deeds there are which are great in our eyes, but are worthless in the eyes of God! Perhaps many great buildings, whether Masājid, mausoleums, hospitals, bridges, rest houses for travellers, or schools, have such an end; the account of such things is with God.

Belief in God and the Hereafter

The relation of this world to the hereafter is similar to the relation between the body and the spirit, or the relation of the outer aspect to the inner aspect. This world and the next are not two wholly and entirely separate worlds; this world and the hereafter together are one unit, just as a sheet of paper has two pages and a coin has two sides. This same Earth that exists in this world will appear in the hereafter in its otherworldly form.

The plants and

objects of this world will appear in the hereafter in their otherworldly aspect. .Fundamentally, the hereafter is the celestial, or malakūt, form of the present world

The condition for an action to acquire a good otherworldly aspect is for it to be performed with attention to God and in order to ascend to God's higher realm. If a person doesn't believe in the hereafter and isn't attentive to God, his or her action will .not have an otherworldly aspect, and thus will not ascend to the higher realm

The otherworldly aspect is the higher aspect, and the worldly aspect is the lower aspect. As long as an action does not acquire illumination and purity through intention, belief, and faith, it cannot attain to the highest realm; only an action that has a spirit .can attain that station. And the spirit of an action is its otherworldly aspect

:How beautiful are the words of the Qur'ān

إِلَيْــهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَ الْعَمَلُ الصَّلِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ

(To Him rises the pure word, and good deeds He raises."(١"

This verse can be understood in two ways, and both have been mentioned in books of exegesis of the Qur'ān. The first is that good deeds raise pure words and pure belief; the other is that pure words and pure belief raise good deeds and make them .otherworldly

The two explanations – both of which are correct and possibly both are intended – together convey the principle that faith has an effect on the acceptance of actions

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Fāt'ir (٣٥), Verse ١٠ -١

and their ascent to God, and actions have an effect on the perfection of faith and on .increasing the degree of faith

This principle is an accepted one in the Islāmic teachings. Our reference to this verse is based on the second explanation, though as we indicated, in our view it is possible .that the verse has intended both meanings at the same time

In any case, it is a mistake for us to think that the actions of those who don't believe in .God and the Day of Judgement ascend to God and acquire an otherworldly aspect

If we are told that someone has taken the northbound highway from Tehran and continued to travel northward for several days, we will obviously not expect that person to reach Qum, Iŝfahān, or Shīrāz (which lie south of Tehran); if someone were to entertain such a possibility, we would laugh and tell him that if that person wished to go to one of those cities, he or she would have to take the southbound highway .from Tehran and travel on it

.It is impossible for someone to travel towards Turkistān, yet reach the Ka`bah

Heaven and Hell are the two ends of a person's spiritual journey. In the next world, every person sees him or herself at his or her journey's final point; one above, and .the other below; one the highest of the high, and the other the lowest of the low

إِنَّ كِتَٰبَ الأَبْرَارَ لَفِـى عِلِّيِّـينَ

The record of the pious is"

(indeed in Illiyīn."(١

إِنَّ كِتَٰبَ الْفُجَّارِ لَفِـى سِجِّينَ

(The record of the vicious is indeed in Sijjīn."(٢"

How is it possible for a person not to travel towards a certain destination, or to travel in a direction opposite to it, yet still reach that destination? Moving towards the highest heaven (`Illiyyīn) requires an intention and desire to reach it, and that in turn requires recognition and belief on the one hand, and facilitation and submission on the other.

If a person has no belief in such a destination, or lacks the quality of facilitation and submission, and in short has neither any desire nor takes even the smallest step to reach it, how can one expect him or her to attain that destination? Without doubt, every path leads to its own destination, and unless God is that destination, the path does not lead to God.

The Qur'ān says:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَة عَجَّلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَاهَا مَذْمُومًا مَدْحُورًا وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الآخِرَة وَسَعَى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَشْكُورًا

"Whoever desires this transitory life, We expedite for him therein whatever We wish, for whomever We desire. Then We appoint hell for him, to enter it, blameful and spurned. Whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it with an endeavour worthy of it, should he be faithful—the endeavour of such will be well-appreciated."(٣)

That is, if a person's level of thinking is no higher than this world and he or she has no goal

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١- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Tat'fīf (٨٣), Verse ١٨

٢- Ibid., Verse ٧

Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Banī Isrā'īl (١٧), Verses ١٨-١٩ -٣

higher than this world, it is impossible for that person to attain the high target of the hereafter; but Our Divine grace and benevolence demand that We grant him or her .something of the worldly goal he or she desired to achieve

There is a subtle point here: this world is the world of nature and matter; it is the world of causes and reasons. Worldly causes are in conflict with each other, and constraints also exist in this material world. Thus, for a person whose goal is this world, there is no guarantee that he or she will definitely attain that goal. The words :the Qur'ān has chosen to impart this point are as follows

".We expedite for him therein whatever We wish, for whomever We desire"

However, one who has a higher goal in his or her spiritual makeup has not given his or her heart to trifling goals, and who, moving forward with faith, takes steps towards a Divine object will certainly attain the goal, since God recognizes the value of good .deeds; He accepts and rewards those good deeds that are presented to Him

Here, effort and endeavour are necessary, since it is impossible for a person to move .forward and attain the goal without taking a step

:Then in the next verse, the Qur'ān says

كُلًّا نُمِدُّ هَـٰؤُلَاءِ وَهَـٰؤُلَاءِ مِنْ عَطَاءِ رَبِّكَ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَاءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا

Each We assist out of the bounty of your Lord, both this group and that one; and the" bounty of your

(Lord has not been withheld from any."(1)

That is, Our bounty is limitless; whoever sows a seed, We bring it to fruition; whoever moves towards a goal, We deliver him or her to that goal.

The Divine sages say that the Being who is necessarily existent by essence is necessarily existent from all aspects and dimensions. Thus, He is necessarily Bountiful (Fayyādh). As a result, whoever wishes something, God assists him or her.

It is not the case that if someone seeks the world, God says to him or her, "You are misguided and have acted contrary to Our guidance and direction, so We will not assist you."

That is not the case; the seeker of the world is also supported and assisted by God in seeking this world and benefits from His unhesitant bounty within the limits permitted by this world of causes, mutual exclusivity, and conflicting outcomes.

In other words, this world is a place appropriate for and given to planting, growing, increasing, and harvesting. It all depends on what seed a person chooses to grow and develop and what harvest he or she wishes to reap. Whatever seed he or she chooses is exactly what will grow and develop in the rich and fertile land of this world.

True, there is an exclusive assistance particular to the people of Truth, which is called the rahīmiyyah (exclusive) mercy; the seekers of this world are deprived of this mercy, since they do not seek it. But the rahmāniyyah

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١- Ibid., Verse ٢٠

general) mercy of God applies equally to all people and all paths. In the words of) :Sa`dī

بر این خوان یغما چه دشمن چه دوست

ادیم زمین سفره عام اوست

,The earth's surface is His all-encompassing table

.From this table all partake, whether friend or foe

From what has been said in this discussion, a portion of the issues under examination .have been resolved

We made clear that action-related goodness is not sufficient for reward in the hereafter; actor-related goodness is also necessary. Action-related goodness is .similar to a body, and actor-related goodness is similar to its spirit and life

And we explained that belief in God and the Day of Judgement is a fundamental condition of actor-related goodness. This conditionality is not based on convention, but is instead an essential and actual conditionality, just like the conditionality of a .particular path with respect to reaching a particular destination

Here, it is necessary to clarify one point, which is that some will perhaps say that actor-related goodness does not necessarily require the intention of seeking nearness to God; if a person does a good deed because of one's conscience or out of a feeling of compassion or mercy, that is sufficient for his or her action to possess .actor-related goodness

In other words, a humanitarian motive is sufficient for actor-related goodness; as long as a person's motive is other than the "self", actor-related goodness is present, ".whether the motive be "God" or "humanism

This point is worthy of consideration. While we don't affirm the view

that it makes no difference whether one's motive be God or humanism, and we can't enter this discussion in depth right now, we do truly believe that whenever an action is performed with the motive of doing good, serving others, and for the sake of .humanity, it is not the same as an action that is performed solely with selfish motives

Without doubt, God will not leave such people without any reward. Several traditions indicate that on account of their good deeds, polytheists like Ĥātam al-Ťā`ī will not be punished or the punishment of such people will be reduced, even though they were .polytheists

.We can understand this point from many traditions which we have before us

۱. Allāmah Majlisīquotes from the book Thawābul A`māl of Shaykh Ŝadūq that `Alī` Ibn Yaqtīn narrated from Imām Mūsā Ibn Ja`far al-Kādhim (as) that he said, "Amongst the Banī Isrā'īl (Children of Isrā'il) there was a believer whose neighbour was an unbeliever. That unbeliever would always show kindness and good conduct towards his believing neighbour. When this unbeliever died, God made for him a house out of a type of mud which shielded him from the heat of the fire, and his sustenance would be given to him from outside his own environment, which was of fire. He was told, 'This is because of your kindness and good conduct towards your (believing neighbour.'"(۱)

Allāmah Majlisī , after quoting this tradition, says: "This tradition and others like it are evidence that the

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۱- Bihārul Anwār, Volume ۳, Page ۳۷۷ (Kumpānī print)

punishment of some unbelievers in Hell will be lifted, and the verses of Qur'ān that say the punishment of the unbelievers shall not be lightened are with regard to those ".who have not performed such good deeds

He also narrates from Imām Muhammad Ibn `Alī al-Bāqir (as) that he said, "There .۲ was a believer who lived in the land of an oppressive king. That oppressor threatened the believer, and thus, the believer fled to a non-Islāmic land, arriving at the place of a polytheist man. The polytheist sat him beside himself and hosted him well. As soon as the polytheist man died, God addressed him, 'I swear by My Honour and Glory that if there were a place in Heaven for a polytheist, I would put you in that place; but O' fire, "'.make him fear, but don't harm him

Then the Imām said, "Every morning and evening his sustenance is brought for him from outside that environment." The Imām was asked, "From Heaven?" He answered, ("From where God wills."(۱

The Noble Messenger (S) said about `Abdullāh Ibn Jud`ān who was one of the well- .۳ known unbelievers in the Age of Ignorance and one of the chiefs of Quraysh, "The one who has the lightest punishment in Hell is Ibn Jud`ān." He was asked why, to which he :replied

إِنَّهُ كَانَ يُطْعِمُ الطَّعَامَ

".He used to give people to eat"

In addition, the Prophet Muhammad (S) said with regard to several people who lived .۴ in the Age of

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Bihārul Anwār, Volume ۳, Page ۳۸۲, (Kumpānī print), from Al-Kāfī -۱

Ignorance: "I saw in Hell the possessor of the tunic and the possessor of the cane who would drive the pilgrims, and also the woman who had a cat which she had tied up and which she would neither feed nor set free so it could find its own food. And I entered Heaven and I saw there the man who saved a dog from thirst and gave it water."(١)

Such people, who are found in more or less every age, will at least have their punishment lightened or their punishment lifted altogether.

In my view, if there are individuals who do good to other people or even to another living being whether a human being or animal without any expectation, not even because they see themselves mirrored in the existence of the deprived (i.e., fear that one day they may be in similar straits is not the moving factor in what they do).

And instead the motive of doing good and serving others is strong enough in them that even if they know that no benefit will accrue to them and not even a single person will come to know of what they did or say so much as "God bless you" to them, yet they still do good deeds, and they are not under the influence of habit and such like, one must say that in the depths of their conscience there exists the light of recognition of God.

And supposing they deny it with their tongues, they confess it

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١ - Both this and the previous tradition are in Bihārul Anwār, Volume ٣, Page ٣٨٢, (Kumpānī print), as recorded from Al-Kāfī.

in the depths of their conscience; their denial is in reality a denial of an imagined being which they have conceived in place of God, or a denial of another imagined thing which they have conceived in place of the return to God and the Day of Judgement, .not a denial of the reality of God and the Resurrection

Love of good and justice and doing good because it is good and just and worthy, without any other factor, is a sign of love of the Essence possessed of Absolute Beauty; therefore, it is not farfetched that such people actually will not be resurrected among the unbelievers, though by their tongues they are considered deniers. And .God knows best

Belief in the Prophecy and Imāmate

Now we will discuss another aspect of the issue, which is the position of those non-Muslims who are monotheists and believe in the Resurrection and perform their .actions for God

Among the People of the Book, people can be found who neither believe the Messiah (Jesus the son of Mary) nor Ezra to be the son of God; they are neither dualists nor fire-worshippers. They do not say, "The Messiah is the son of God," or "`Uzayr is the son of God," nor that Ahrāman is the god of evil; they also believe in the Day of ?Judgement. What is the outcome of the actions of such people

Right now our discussion is not about those inventors, innovators, and servants of humanity who are materialists and deny God's existence, and whose practical

.motives naturally do not transcend the material realm

From the preceding discussions, our view regarding them from the perspective of Islam was made clear.Our discussion in this section pertains to those good-doers who believe in Creation and in the Resurrection, and thus are able to have a higher motive .in their actions and work towards a goal that goes beyond the material realm

It is said that Edison and Pasteur were such people, that they were religious people and had religious motives. That is, in their actions they, just like religious Muslims, .worked for God's pleasure and with a Divine motive

In reality, these Christians (Edison and Pasteur) are not Christians [they may be called dispositional Muslims], because if they were Christians and believed in the creeds of the existing Christianity, they would regard the Messiah as God, and naturally it would not be possible for them to be true monotheists; perhaps few of today's Christian .intellectuals believe in the superstitions of the Trinity

In order to answer this question, one must determine in what way faith in the Prophethood and Imāmate (Divinely appointed leadership) are necessary, and why .such faith is a condition for the acceptance of actions

It appears that faith in the Prophets and friends of God is involved in the acceptance :of actions for two reasons

First, recognition of them goes back to recognition of God. In reality, recognition of God and His affairs is incomplete without recognition of His friends. In other words, recognition of God

.in a complete form is to recognize the manifestations of His guidance

Second, recognition of the station of Prophethood and Imāmate is necessary because without it, it is not possible to obtain the complete and correct program of action to .achieve guidance

The big difference between a Muslim good-doer and an unbelieving good-doer is that the unbeliever who does good deeds does not possess the proper program to achieve .guidance and thus has only a negligible chance of success

In contrast, since the Muslim has submitted to a religion that has a comprehensive and proper program for guidance, he or she is assured of success if he or she .implements that program correctly

Good deeds do not consist only of doing good to others; all obligatory, forbidden, .recommended, and disliked actions also form part of the program of good deeds

The practising Christian, who is outside the fold of Islām and who lacks the correct program is deprived of its great gifts since he or she commits actions which are .prohibited. For example, alcohol is forbidden, but he or she drinks it

We know that alcohol was prohibited because of its personal, societal, and spiritual harms and naturally one who drinks alcohol will face its harms, similar to how a person who is deprived of the guidance of a doctor may do something which makes .his or her heart, liver, or nerves prematurely sick and shortens his or her life

In the program of Islām, there are some

commands which are conditional to act upon for spiritual perfection and development. It is obvious that a non-Muslim, no matter how unprejudiced and free of obstinacy, by virtue of being deprived of the complete program of human perfection, will also .remain deprived of its features

Such a person will naturally be deprived of the great acts of worship, such as the five daily prayers, fasting during the month of Ramadhān, and pilgrimage to the House of .(God (Ĥajj

He or she is like someone who plants seeds without a systematic method of farming; in no way will the product such a person obtains be like that obtained by a person who sows the earth according to a comprehensive and proper program, plants at an appropriate time and weeds at the proper time, and in short performs all the .necessary technical steps

The difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim good-doer can be explained like this: the Muslim good-doer is like a sick person who is under the care and direction of an expert doctor; his or her food and medicine are all under the direction of the .doctor

With regard to the type of medicine and food and its timing and amount, he or she acts completely as directed. However, the non-Muslim good doer is like a sick person who has no such program and acts as he or she pleases; he or she eats whatever .food or medicine that comes into his or her hand

Such a sick person may occasionally consume

a beneficial medicine and get a positive result, but it is just as likely that he or she will make use of a medicine that is harmful or even fatal. Similarly, it is possible he or she may eat a beneficial food, but by subsequent negligence or by eating the wrong food, .may cancel the beneficial effect of the first food

With this explanation, it becomes clear that the difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim who believes in God is that the Muslim is a theist who possesses a proper program, while the non-Muslim theist performs his or her actions without a correct program. In other words, the Muslim has been guided, and the non-Muslim, though he :or she believes in God, is misguided. In this very regard the Qur'ān says

فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوا

(So if they submit, they will have achieved guidance."(١"

From all that we have said in the last two sections, it has become clear that all non-Muslims are not equal in terms of being rewarded for good deeds; there is a great difference between a non-Muslim who doesn't believe in God and the Resurrection and one who believes in God and in the Day of Judgement but is deprived of the gift of .faith in the Prophethood

For the first group, it is not possible to perform an action acceptable to God, whereas for the second it is possible. It is possible for this group to go to Heaven under certain conditions, but for

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Āli Imrān (٣), Verse ٢٠ -١

.the first group it is not possible

Apparently, the reason that Islām differentiates between polytheists and the People of the Book in its laws of interaction in that it doesn’t tolerate the polytheist but tolerates the People of the Book, it forces the polytheist to abandon his or her belief but doesn’t force the People of the Book is that the polytheist or atheist, by virtue of his or her polytheism or denial, forever closes the gate of salvation for him or herself and is in a condition of having deprived him or herself of crossing the material world .and ascending to the higher world and eternal Paradise

However, the People of the Book are in a condition in which they can perform good deeds, even if in a deficient manner, and with certain conditions can attain the results .of those actions

:The Qur’ān says, addressing the People of the Book

تَعٌالَوا إِلَـــى كَلَمِهٍ سَوٌاءَ بَيْنَنٌا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلاَّ نَعْبُدَ إِلاَّ اللّهَ وَلاٌ نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلاٌ يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنٌا بَعْضاً أَرْبٌابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللّهِ

Come to a common word between us and yourselves, that we worship none but God“ and associate none with Him, and that we take not each other as lords in place of (God.”(۱

The Noble Qur’ān has given the People of the Book such a call, but has absolutely not .given and does not give such a call to polytheists and atheists

Affliction

The third issue that deserves attention in relation with the value of faith is the negative value of unbelief

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Ibid., Verse ۶۴ -۱

and obstinacy. That is, do unbelief and obstinacy cause a good deed to become null ?and void and lose its effect, making it go bad as an affliction does

In other words, if a person performs a good deed with all the conditions of action-related and actor-related goodness, and yet on the other hand that person shows obstinacy with respect to truth, especially a truth that is one of the principles of religion, in this situation, does this deed which in and of itself is good, otherworldly, and luminous and free of defect from the Divine and celestial dimension become null and void because of this stubbornness and obstinacy or other devious spiritual .condition? Here the question of affliction comes about

It is possible for an action to have both action-related and actor-related goodness, and in other words to have both the proper body and a sound soul and spirit, to be good both from the worldly and from the otherworldly point of view, but at the same time to be destroyed and become null from the otherworldly point of view through affliction, just like a sound seed that is planted in fertile ground and even gives fruit, but which falls prey to an affliction before it can be used, and is destroyed, for .example, by locusts or lightening. The Qur'ān calls this affliction habt' or invalidation

Such affliction is not exclusive to unbelievers; it can take place with respect to the .good deeds of Muslims as well

It is possible that a believing Muslim may give alms to a deserving needy person for God's sake and for that deed to be accepted by God, but for him or her to later destroy that good deed and make it void by laying an obligation on the other person .or some other form of mental torment

:The Qur'ān says

يٰا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لاٰ تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقٰتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَ الأَذى

O you who have faith! Do not render your charities void by reproaches and" (affronts."(1

:Another of the afflictions of good deeds is jealousy, as has been said

إِنَّ الْحَسَدَ لَيَأْكُلُ الْحَسَنٰاتِ كَمٰا تَأْكُلُ النّٰارَ الْحَطَبَ

(Verily envy eats away good deeds just as fire destroys wood."(2"

Another affliction is juhūd or denial, or a condition of fighting with the truth. Denial means that a person perceives the truth but at the same time opposes it. In other words, denial is when one's mind has submitted through reason and logic and truth has become clear to one's intellect and power of thinking, but the spirit and its' selfish .and arrogant feelings rebel and refuse to submit

The essence of unbelief is opposition and resistance to truth while recognizing what it is. Previously, when we discussed the levels of submission, we gave some explanation regarding this condition. Here, we provide some further explanations relevant to the .discussion of afflictions

:Imām `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) says, defining Islām

أَلإِسْلاٰمُ هُوَ التَّسْلِيمُ.

(Islām is submission."(3"

That is, when personal interest, prejudice, or habit conflicts with truth and

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۱- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Baqarah (۲), Verse ۲۶۴

۲- Bihārul Anwār, Volume ۱۵, Part ۳, Page ۱۳۲-۱۳۳ (Ākhūndī print)

۳- Nahjul Balāgha, Saying ۱۲۵

.reality, for a person to submit to truth and turn away from all that isn't truth is Islām

Denial means a condition of wilful unbelief, the condition that Abū Jahl possessed. He knew that the Noble Messenger (S) was truthful in his claim of being a Prophet, but .because he had a condition of wilful unbelief, he didn't believe in him

Sometimes people can be heard to say things like, "We're willing to go to Hell, but not to do such-and-such a thing." That is, even if that action is the truth, we still are not willing to accept it. Other expressions, such as to be a mule, to be intractable, and .such like all describe this quality of denial

The Qur'ān has excellently described the presence of this quality in some people :where it says

وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَـٰذَا هُوَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْـنَا حِجَارَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوِ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

And when they said, O' God, if this be the truth from You, rain down upon us stones" (from heaven, or bring us to a painful punishment."(١

What a picture the Qur'ān has painted! By narrating one sentence, it indicates the sick .mentality of some people

The obstinate person whose words have been quoted in this verse, instead of saying, "O' God, if this be the truth from You, then make my heart ready to accept it," says, "If this be the truth, send upon me a punishment and annihilate me, because I haven't the strength to

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Anfāl (٨), Verse ٣٢ -١

".remain alive and face the truth

This condition is a very dangerous one, even if it be in small matters. And it may well be that many of us are suffering from it God forbid!

Suppose that an eminent doctor, or mujtahid, or some other specialist who has a worldwide reputation makes a determination and expresses an opinion in an issue related to his or her specialization; then, some unknown, a doctor or a young student, expresses a conflicting opinion in the same issue and even presents definitive proofs which that eminent personality him or herself affirms in his or her heart the truth of what that person is saying, but other people remain unaware as they were before, and in view of the reputation of that eminent person, accept his or her view.

In this situation, if that famous expert submits to the opinion of that young doctor or student, that is if he or she submits to reality and admits his or her own mistake, he or she is truly a "Muslim," because "Islām is submission," and in a way it can be said this is an example of the verse

"Rather, one who submits himself to God."(۱)

Such a person is free of the impure trait of denial. But if he or she engages in denial and opposes the truth to save his or her standing and fame, he or she is wilfully seeking unbelief and is in a state of juhd.

If that doctor, for

۱- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Baqarah (۲), Verse ۱۱۲

example, is not entirely unfair, he or she may not take back his or her words, but may change in practice; and if he or she is very unfair, he or she will not change in practice, either, and will give the same prescription and perhaps kill the patient, then say that the patient was beyond treatment and the same goes for any other eminent .intellectual

The opposite of this condition also occurs frequently. There is a tradition in Al-Kāfī that .sheds light on this reality

Muhammad Ibn Muslim narrated that he heard Imām Muhammad Ibn `Alī al-Bāqir :(as) say

كُلُّ شَیْءٍ یَجُرُّهُ الإِقْرَارُ وَالتَّسْلِیمُ فَهُوَ الإِیْمَانُ، وَکُلُّ شَیْءٍ یَجُرُّهُ الإِنْکَارُ وَالْجُحُودُ، فَهُوَ الْکُفْر

Everything that results from confession and submission is faith, and everything that" (results from denial and rejection is unbelief."(۱)

They say that the late Āyatullāh Sayyid Ĥusayn Kūhkamarī who was one of the students of the author of Jawāhirul Kalām and a prominent and well-known Mujtahid and recognized teacher, would go daily at an appointed time, as was his pattern, to .one of the Masājid of Najaf and teach

As we know, the post of teaching the level of "Khārij" of jurisprudence and its .principles is the grounds for leadership and religious authority

Leadership and religious authority for a seminary student mean to go suddenly from zero to infinity, since a student is nothing as long as he is not a religious authority (Marji`), and his opinion and belief are not given the least importance, and usually he

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۱- Al-Kāfī, Volume ۲, Page ۳۸۷

lives a meagre life. But as soon as he becomes a religious authority, all of a sudden his .view is obeyed and no one has anything to say in the face of his opinion

Financially as well as intellectually, he has full discretion without being held accountable to anyone. Thus, a scholar who has a chance of becoming a religious authority passes through a sensitive stage; the late Sayyid Ĥusayn Kūhkamarī was in .such a stage

One day he was returning from somewhere, perhaps from visiting someone, and no more than half an hour remained until his class. He thought to himself that if he were to return home in that short time, he wouldn't have time to accomplish anything, so it .was better to go to the appointed place and wait for his students

He went and saw that none of his students had come yet, but he saw that in a corner of the Masjid a humble-looking Shaykh was seated and lecturing to a group of students. The late Sayyid listened to his words, and with great surprise he realized .that the Shaykh's discourse was very scholarly

The next day, he was motivated to deliberately come early and listen to the words of that Shaykh. So he came and listened, and his conviction from the previous day became stronger. This was repeated for several days, and the late Sayyid Ĥusayn became sure that the Shaykh was more learned than he himself and

that he could benefit from his lectures, and if his own students were to attend the .Shaykh's lectures, they would benefit more

Here it was that he saw himself as being offered a choice between submission and .obstinacy, between faith and unbelief, between the hereafter and this world

The next day when his students came and gathered, he said, "Friends, today I want to tell you something new. The Shaykh who is sitting in that corner with a few students is more deserving to teach than I am, and I myself benefit from his lectures, so let us all go together to his lecture." From that day, he joined the circle of students of that humble Shaykh who's eyes were slightly swollen and in whom the signs of poverty .were visible

This austere Shaykh was the same scholar who later became famous as Shaykh ".Murtadhā al-Anŝārī , earning the title "teacher of the latter-day scholars

Shaykh Anŝārī at that time had just returned from a trip of several years to Mashhad, Isfahān and Kāshān and had acquired much knowledge from that trip, especially from .the presence of the late Ĥājj Mullāh Ahmad Narāqī in Kāshān

Whoever this condition is found in is an example of the verse "one who submits ".himself to God

Thus, unbelief and denial mean to wilfully stand in the face of the truth and show obstinacy. Later, we will mention that in the view of the Qur'ān, the unbeliever has been called an unbeliever because he or she

is in a state of denial and obstinacy while at the same time perceiving the truth; and it .is this state that causes nullification and is considered an affliction of good deeds

This is why in relation to the actions of those who disbelieve in which they have been :compared to ashes which a strong wind blows upon and destroys, God tells us

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ أَعْمَلَهُمْ كَرَمَادِ اشْتَدَتْ بِهِ الرِّيْحُ فِى يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ

A parable of those who defy their Lord: their deeds are like ashes over which the" (wind blows hard on a tempestuous day..."(۱

Suppose that Pasteur performed his intellectual research which led to the discovery of bacteria for God and that his intention was to serve humanity and seek nearness to .God, that is not sufficient for him to be rewarded by God in the end

If he possessed qualities like denial and the like and was prejudiced in favour of his own beliefs, then without doubt all his actions are null and void, since in this case he is in a state of denying the truth, and this state of opposing the truth destroys all of a .person's efforts

This would be the case if, for example, it were said to him, "Christianity is a regional and an ancestral faith for you; have you researched whether there is a better and more complete religion than Christianity or not?" and he were to reject those words and – without being ready to study and search say, "The best religion

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Ibrāhīm (۱۴), Verse ۱۸ -۱

is Christianity.” A person’s actions, in such a case, are like ashes subject to ruin by a .swift wind

We only mentioned Pasteur as an example; we don’t mean to say that Pasteur was like this. God alone knows that. If we, too, are obstinate towards to the truth, we fall into this general rule. O Lord! Protect us from the state of unbelief, obstinacy, and .opposition to the truth

Apart from what has been mentioned, there are also other afflictions that befall good deeds. Perhaps one of these afflictions is apathy and indifference in defending truth .and righteousness

One must not only avoid denial and rejection of truth, but in addition, one must also not be neutral, and instead must defend the truth. The people of Kūfah (`Irāq) knew that truth was with Ĥusain Ibn `Alī (as), and they had even admitted this fact but they were neglectful in supporting and defending the truth. They didn’t show resolve and .perseverance. Not to support the truth is to deny the truth in practice

Lady Zaynab bint `Alī (sa), in her famous address to the people of Kūfah, rebukes them for their negligence in coming to the defence of the truth and for oppressing and :sinning against it. She said

يُا أَهْلَ الْكُوفَهِ، يُا أَهْلَ الْخَتْلِ وَالْغَدْرِ وَالْخَذْلِ، أَتَبْكُونَ؟ أَلاٌ فَلاٌ رَقَأَتِ الْعَبْرَهُ، وَلاٌ هَدَأَتِ الزَّفْرَهُ. إِنَّمٌا مَثَلُكُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّتِى نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهٌا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّهٍ أَنْكٌاثاً

,O’ people of Kūfah! O’ people of deception treachery and disloyalty“

do you weep? So let your tears not dry, and your cries not cease! Your parable is that (of the woman who undid her weaving after having made it firm."(۱)

Another of the afflictions that can befall actions is conceit and vanity. Boasting about .one's deeds, like jealousy, conceit and denial, also destroys actions

There is a tradition that says: "Sometimes a person performs a good and worthy deed, and his or her action finds a place in the `Illiyyīn, but later he or she mentions that action in public and boasts of it. This causes the action to descend. If he or she mentions it again, it descends further. When it is mentioned a third time, it is ".destroyed altogether, and sometimes is converted into an evil deed

:Imām Muhammad Ibn `Alī al-Bāqir (as) said

أَلاِبْقّاءُ عَلی الْعَمَلِ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ. قّالَ (الرّاوی): وَمّا الإبْقّاءُ عَلی الْعَمَلِ؟ قّالَ: یَصِلَ الرَّجُلُ بِصِلَهٍ وَیُنْفِقُ نَفَقَهً لِلّهِ وَحْدَهُ لاّ شَرِیکَ لَهُ، فَتُکْتَبُ لَهُ سِرّاً، ثُمَّ یَذْکُرُهّا فَتُمْحی فَتُکْتَبُ لَهُ عَلاّنِیَهً، ثُمَّ یَذْکُرُهّا فَتُمْحی وَتُکْتَبُ لَهُ رِیّاءً

Preserving a deed is harder than the deed itself." The narrator asked what" preserving a deed meant. The Imām replied, "A person does a good deed and gives something in the way of God, and it is recorded for him as an act done in secret. Then he mentions it, so it is erased and recorded as an act done in public. Then he mentions it, so it is erased

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Nafas al-Mahmūm, Page ۳۳۹ -۱

(and recorded as an act done to show off."(1)

Below the Zero Point

point

So far our discussion has been of the acceptance and non-acceptance of acts of worship and good and positive deeds of non-Muslims, and in other words the above discussion was about what is above the zero point; the discussion was whether their good deeds cause them to ascend or not.

Now let us see what is the state of what is below the zero point, that is, what happens to the sins and evil deeds of non-Muslims. Are they all alike from the aspect of our discussion, or is there a difference?

In addition, in these actions that are evil and bring a person down, is there a difference between Muslims and non-Muslims, and similarly between Shī`as and non-Shī`as? Does a Muslim, and especially a Shī`a Muslim, have a sort of protection with regard to such actions, or not?

In the preceding matter, it became clear that God only punishes people when they commit wrong deeds out of culpability (taqŝīr), that is, when they do so deliberately and with knowledge, not out of incapacity (quŝūr). Previously, we translated and explained the verse of Qur'ān from which Scholars of the principles of jurisprudence derive the rule that says "It is evil to punish one without having explained his or her duty."

Now, to clarify the situation of non-Muslims with respect to actions that fall below the zero point and to study their punishment and retribution for the evil deeds

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1- Wasā'ilush Shī`a, Volume ١, Page ٥٥

they commit, we have no choice but to broach another issue that is touched upon in Islāmic sciences and is rooted in the Noble Qur'ān; and that is the issue of "incapacity" .and "powerlessness" (istiº`āf). Here, we begin our discussion under this heading

The Incapable and the Powerless

point

The scholars of Islām make use of two terms; they say that some people are "powerless" (mustaºd'`afīn) or are "awaiting the command of God" (murjawn li-`amrillāh). "Powerless" refers to the unfortunate and unable; "those awaiting the command of God" denotes people whose affairs and status are to be regarded as being with God and in His hands; God Himself shall deal with them as His wisdom and .mercy dictate. Both terms have been taken from the Qur'ān

:In Sūratul Nisā, verses ٩٧- ٩٩, we read

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلآئِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُوْلَـئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا إِلاَّ الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ لاَ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلاَ يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلاً فَأُوْلَـئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا

And those whose souls the Angels take while they are oppressive to themselves;" they say, 'What state were you in?' They say, 'We were weak in the land.' They say, 'Was not God's earth wide, that you may migrate in it?' So the abode of those people is Hell, and evil an abode it is, except the powerless among the men, women, and children who neither have access to any means nor are

guided to any way; so perhaps God may pardon them, and God is Ever-Forgiving, ".Ever-Pardoning

In the first verse, mention is made of the interrogation of some people by the Divine appointees (in the grave). The Angels ask them, "What state were you in, in the world?" They forward the excuse: "We were unfortunate, our means were inadequate (and we were unable change our state)." The Angels will say, "You were not powerless, since God's earth was spacious and you could have migrated from your homeland and gone to an area where you had greater opportunity; thus you are ".culpable and deserving of punishment

In the second verse, the state of some people is mentioned who are truly powerless; whether they be men, women, or children. These are people who had no means and .no way out

In the third verse, the Qur'ān gives tidings and hope that God may show forgiveness .towards the second group

In his commentary of the Qur'ān, al-Mīzān, our most esteemed teacher, `Allāmah Ťabā'ťabā'ī , has this to say regarding these very verses: "God considers ignorance of religion and every form of preventing the establishment of the signs of religion to be .oppression, and Divine forgiveness does not encompass this

However, an exception has been made for the powerless who did not have the ability to move and change the environment. The exception has been mentioned in such a .way that it is not exclusive to when powerlessness takes this form

Just as it is possible for

the source of powerlessness to be an inability to change the environment, it is possible for it to be because a person's mind is not aware of the truth, and thus (remains deprived of the truth."(١)

Many traditions have been narrated in which those people who, for various reasons (have remained incapable, have been counted among the "powerless."(٢)

:In verse ١٠۶ of Sūratul Tawbah (٩), God says

وَ ءَاخِرُونَ مُرْجَوْنَ لِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَ إِمَّا يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

And others who are awaiting the command of God, He will either punish them or He" ".will forgive them; and God is Knowing, Wise

The term murjawn li-`amrillāh (those awaiting God's command) has been taken from .this verse

It has been narrated that Imām Muhammad Ibn `Alī al-Bāqir (as) said about this :verse

Verily there was a people in the early era of Islām who were once polytheists and" committed grave misdeeds; they killed Hamzah and Ja`far and people like them from among the Muslims. Later, they became Muslims, abandoning polytheism for monotheism, but faith did not find its way into their hearts for them to be counted among the believers and become deserving of Heaven, while at the same time they had forsaken denial and obstinacy, which was the cause of their being (deserving of) punishment. They were neither believers, nor unbelievers and deniers; these then are (the murjawn li-`amrillāh, whose affair is referred to God."(٣)

In another tradition, it has been narrated that Ĥumrān Ibn A`yan said, "I asked

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١- al-Mīzān, Volume ۵, Page ۵١

٢- Refer to al-Mīzān, Volume ۵, Page ۵۶-۶١, "Discussion of the Traditions"

al-Mīzān, Volume ۹, Page ۴۰۶, from al-Kāfī -۳

Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as) about the powerless." He replied, "They are neither of the believers nor of the unbelievers; they are the ones whose affair is (referred to God's command."(١)

Though the purport of the verse regarding those whose affair is referred to God's command is that one should say only that their affair is with God, still, from the tone of the verse regarding the powerless, a hint of Divine forgiveness and pardon can be .deduced

What is understood in total is that those people who in some way were incapable and .are not blameworthy, will not be punished by God

In al-Kāfī, there is a tradition from Hamzah Ibn Ťayyār who narrated that Imām :Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as) said

People are of six groups, and in the end are of three groups: the party of faith, the" party of unbelief, and the party of deviation. These groups come into being from God's promise and warning regarding Heaven and Hell. (That is, people are divided into these groups according to their standing with respect to these promises and warnings.) Those six groups are the believers, the unbelievers, the powerless, those referred to God's command, those who confess their sin and have mixed good deeds (with evil deeds, and the people of the heights (a`rāf)."(٢)

Also in al-Kāfī, it is narrated from Zurārah that he said: "I visited Imām Muhammad Ibn `Alī al-Bāqir (as) with my brother Ĥumrān, or with my other brother Bukahīr. I said

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al-Mīzān, Volume ٩, Page ۴٠٧, from Tafsīr al-`Ayyāshī -١

al-Kāfī, Volume ٢, "Kitab al-Imān wa al-Kufr," section "A`nāf al-Nās," Page ٣٨١ - ٢ ((Ākhūndī print

to the Imām, ‘We measure people with a measuring tape: Whoever is a Shī`a like ourselves, whether among the descendants of `Alī or otherwise, we forge a bond of friendship with him (as a Muslim and one who will achieve salvation), and whoever is opposed to our creed, we dissociate from him (as a misguided person and one who will not achieve salvation).’”

The Imām said, “Zurārah! God’s word is more truthful than yours; if what you say is correct, then what about God’s words where He says, ‘Except the powerless among the men, women, and children who find no way out nor find a path?’ What about those who are referred to God’s command? What about those regarding whom God says, ‘They mixed good deeds and other, evil deeds?’ What happened to the people of the heights? Who, then, are the ones whose hearts are to be inclined?”

Ĥammād , in his narration of this event from Zurārah , narrates that he said, “At this point the Imām and I began to argue. Both of us raised our voices, such that those outside the house heard us.”

Jamāl Ibn Darrāj narrates from Zurārah in this event that the Imām said, “Zurārah! [God has made it] incumbent upon Himself that He take the misguided (not the unbelievers and deniers) to Heaven.”(١)

Also in al-Kāfī it is narrated from Imām Mūsā Ibn Ja`far al-Kādhim (as) that he said: “`Alī (as) is a gate among the gates of guidance; whoever enters

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١ - Ibid., Page ٣٨٢. The last sentence of the tradition is: حَقاً عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يُدْخِلَ الضُّلَّالَ الْجَنَّةَ translated as above. But in some texts, it is as follows: حَقاً عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ لاَ يُدْخِلَ الضُّلَّالَ الْجَنَّةَ which would mean that the Imam (as) changed his opinion and accepted the view of Zurārah. Obviously, this isn’t correct, but based on this reading another meaning is possible, which is that the Imam (as) may have intended that these people will not be punished, but they will also not go to Heaven.

from this gate is a believer, and whoever exits from it is a unbeliever; and one who neither enters from it nor exits from it is among the party whose affair is referred to ".God

In this tradition, the Imām clearly mentions a party who are neither among the people of faith, submission, and salvation, nor among the people of denial and annihilation.(1)

:(Also in al-Kāfī, it is narrated from Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as

لَوْ أَنَّ الْعِبَّادَ إِذًا جَهَلُوا وَقَفُوا وَلو لَم يَجْحَدُوا، لَمْ يَكْفُرُوا

If only people, when they are ignorant, pause and don't reject, they will not be" unbelievers."(2)

If one ponders upon the traditions which have come down from the pure Imāms (as) and most of which have been collected in the sections "Kitāb al-Ĥujjah" and "Kitāb al-Īmān wa al-Kufr" in al-Kāfī, he or she will realize that the Imām's (as) position was that whatever [punishment] befalls a person is because truth was presented to him or her, and he or she showed prejudice or obstinacy towards it, or at the very least was .in a position where he or she should have researched and searched, but didn't do so

And as for people who, out of incapacity of understanding and perception, or because of other reasons, are in a position where they are not in denial or negligent in researching, they are not counted among the deniers and adversaries. They are counted among the powerless and those referred to God's command. And it is understood from

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١- Ibid., Page ٣٨٨

٢- Ibid.

.the traditions that the pure Imams (as) view many people to be of this category

In al-Kāfī, in the section "Kitāb al-Ĥujjah," Shaykh Kulaynī narrates several traditions :to the effect that

كُلُّ مَنْ دٰانَ اللّٰهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِعِبٰادَهٍ يَجْهَدْ فِيهٰا نَفْسَهُ وَلاٰ إِمٰامَ لَهُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ فَسَعْيِهِ غَيْرَ مَقْبُولٍ

Whoever obeys God with an act of worship in which he exhausts himself, but doesn't" (have an Imām appointed by God, his effort is not accepted."(١)

:Or that

لاٰ يَقْبَلَ اللّٰهُ أَعْمٰالَ الْعِبٰادَ إِلاَّ بِمَعْرِفَتِهِ

God does not accept the actions of His servants without recognition of him (the" (Imām)."(٢)

At the same time, in that same "Kitāb al-Ĥujjah" of al-Kāfī it is narrated from Imām :(Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as

مَنْ عَرَفَنٰا كٰانَ مُؤْمِناً، وَمَنْ أَنْكَرَنٰا كٰانَ كٰافِراً، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَعْرِفْنٰا وَلَمْ يَنْكِرْنٰا كٰانَ ضٰالاً حَتَّى رجع إِلـى الْهُدى الَّذِى افْتَرَضَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ طٰاعَتِنٰا، فَإِنْ يَمُتْ عَلى ضَلاٰلَتِهِ يَفْعَلُ اللّٰهُ مٰا يَشٰاءُ

Whoever recognizes us is a believer, and whoever denies us is an unbeliever, and" whoever neither recognizes nor denies us is misguided until he or she returns to the guidance of our obedience which God enjoined upon him or her. So if he or she dies in (the state of misguidedness, God shall do what He pleases."(٣

Muhammad Ibn Muslim says: "I was with Imām as-Ŝādiq (as). I was seated to his left, and Zurārah to his right. Abū Baŝir entered and asked, "What do you say about a ".person who has doubts about God?" The Imam replied, "He is a unbeliever

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Ibid., Volume ١, Page ١٨٣ -١

Ibid., Page ٢٠٣ -٢

Ibid., Page ۱۸۷ -۳

What do you say about a person who has doubts about the Messenger of God?" "He" is an unbeliever." At this point the Imām turned towards Zurārah and said, "Verily, such a person is a unbeliever if he or she denies and shows obstinacy."(1)

Also in al-Kāfī, Kulaynī narrates that Hāshim Ibn al-Barīd (Ŝāhib al-Barīd) said: "Muhammad Ibn Muslim, Abul Khaťťāb, and I were together in one place. Abul Khaťťāb asked, "What is your belief regarding one who doesn't know the affair of Imāmate?" I said, "In my view he or she is a unbeliever." Abul Khaťťāb said, "As long as the evidence is not complete for him or her, he or she is not a unbeliever; if the evidence is complete and still he or she doesn't recognize it, then he or she is a unbeliever." Muhammad Ibn Muslim said, "Glory be to God! If he or she doesn't recognize the Imām and doesn't show obstinacy or denial, how can he or she be considered an unbeliever? No, one who doesn't know, if he doesn't show denial, is not an unbeliever." Thus, the three of us had three opposing beliefs.

When the Ĥajj season came, I went for Ĥajj and went to Imām as-Ŝādiq (as). I told" him of the discussion between the three of us and asked the Imam his view. The Imām replied, "I will reply to this question when the other two are also present. I and the three of you

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1- Ibid., Page ۳۹۹

shall meet tonight in Minā near the middle Jamarah.”

“That night, the three of us went there. The Imām, leaning on a cushion, began questioning us.”

“What do you say about the servants, womenfolk, and members of your own families? Do they not bear witness to the unity of God?”

I replied, “Yes.”

“Do they not bear witness to the prophecy of the Messenger?”

“Yes.”

“Do they recognize the Imāmate and wilāyah (Divinely-appointed authority) like yourselves?”

“No.”

“So what is their position in your view?”

“My view is that whoever does not recognize the Imām is an unbeliever.”

“Glory be to God! Haven’t you seen the people of the streets and markets? Haven’t you seen the water-bearers?”

“Yes, I have seen and I see them.”

“Do they not pray? Do they not fast? Do they not perform Ĥajj? Do they not bear witness to the unity of God and the prophethood of the Messenger?”

“Yes.”

“Well, do they recognize the Imām as you do?”

“No.”

“So what is their condition?”

".My view is that whoever doesn't recognize the Imām is a unbeliever"

"Glory be to God! Do you not see the state of the Ka'bah and the circumambulation of these people? Don't you see how the people of Yemen cling to the curtains of the Ka'bah?"

".Yes"

"Don't they profess monotheism and believe in the Messenger? Don't they pray, fast, and perform Ĥajj?"

".Yes"

"Well, do they recognize the Imām as you do?"

".No"

"What is your belief about them?"

".In my view, whoever doesn't recognize the Imām is an unbeliever"

"Glory be to God! This belief is

".the belief of the Khārijites

"?At that point the Imām said, "Now, do you wish me to inform you of the truth

Hāshim, who in the words of the late Faydh al-Kāshānī , knew that the Imām's view ".was in opposition to his own belief, said, "No

The Imām said, "It is very bad for you to say something of your own accord that you ".have not heard from us

Hāshim later said to the others: "I presumed that the Imām affirmed the view of (Muhammad Ibn Muslim and wished to bring us to his view."(١

In al-Kāfī, after this tradition, Shaykh Kulaynī narrates the well-known tradition of the discussion of Zurārah with Imām Muhammad Ibn `Alī al-Bāqir (as) in this regard, .which is a detailed discussion

In al-Kāfī at the end of "Kitāb al-Īmān wa al-Kufr," there is a chapter entitled, "No (action causes harm with belief, and no action brings benefit with unbelief."(٢

But the traditions that have come under this heading do not affirm this heading. The :following tradition is among them

:(Ya`qūb Ibn Shu`ayb said, I asked Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as

هَلْ لِأَحَدٍ عَلى مَا عَمِلَ ثَوَابٌ عَلى اللّٰهِ مُوْجِبٌ إِلاَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ؟ قَالَ: لاَ

Does anyone aside from the believers have a definite reward from God?" He replied," (“No."(٣

The purport of this tradition is that God has given a promise of reward to none but the believers, and without doubt He will fulfil His promise. However, aside from the believers, God has not given any promise for Him to

Ibid., Volume ۲, chapter on deviation (Dhalāl), Page ۴۰۱ -۱

Ibid., Volume ۲, Page ۴۶۳ -۲

Ibid., Volume ۲, Page ۴۶۴ -۳

have to fulfil of necessity. And since He has not given any promise, it is up to Him .Himself to reward or not to reward

With this explanation, the Imām wishes to convey that the non-Believers are counted with the powerless and those whose affair is referred to God's command in terms of whether God will reward them or not; it must be said that their affair is with God, for .Him to reward or not to

At the end of this chapter of al-Kāfī there are some traditions which we will mention ".later under the heading, "The Sins of Muslims

Of course, the relevant traditions are not limited to those mentioned here; there are other traditions as well. Our deduction from all of these traditions is what we have mentioned above. If someone deduces something else and doesn't affirm our view, he or she may explain his or her view with its evidence, and perhaps we can benefit .from it as well

From the View of the Islāmic Sages

Islāmic philosophers have discussed this issue in a different way, but the conclusion they have reached in the end corresponds with what we have deduced from the .verses and traditions

Avicenna (Ibn Sīna) says: "People are divided into three groups in terms of soundness of body or physical beauty: one group is at the stage of perfection in soundness or beauty, another is at the extreme of ugliness or illness. Both of these groups are in a .minority

The group that forms the majority are the

people who in the middle in terms of health and beauty; neither are they absolutely sound or healthy, nor do they, like the deformed, suffer from deformities or permanent sickness; neither are they extremely beautiful, nor ugly."

"Similarly, from the spiritual point of view, people fall into the same categories; one group is in love with truth, and another is its stubborn enemy.

The third group consists of those in the middle; and they are the majority, who are neither in love with truth like the first group, nor its enemies like the second. These are people who have not reached the truth, but if they were shown the truth, they wouldn't refuse to accept it."

In other words, from the Islāmic perspective and from a jurisprudential viewpoint, they are not Muslims, but in real terms, they are Muslims. That is, they are submissive to truth and have no stubbornness toward it.

Avicenna says, after this division:

وَاسْتَوْسَعَ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ

"Believe God's mercy to be encompassing."(1)

In the discussions of good and evil of al-Asfār, Mullah Ŝadrā mentions this point as an objection: "How do you say that good overcomes evil even though, when we look at the human being, which is the noblest creation, we see that most people are caught in evil deeds in terms of their practice, and stuck in unsound beliefs and compound ignorance in terms of their beliefs?

And evil deeds and false beliefs destroy their position on the Day of Judgement, making them worthy of perdition.

1- nama) al-Ishārāt, towards the end of the seventh section)

Thus, the final outcome of humanity, which is the best of creation, is wretchedness ".and misfortune

Mullāh Ŝadrā , in answering this objection, points to the words of Ibn Sīnā and says: "In the next life, people are the same as they are in this life in terms of their .soundness and felicity

Just as the extremely sound and exceedingly beautiful, and likewise the very ill and exceptionally ugly, are a minority in this world, while the majority is in the middle and is relatively sound, so too in the next world the perfect, who in the words of the Qur'ān are al-Sābiqūn, or "the foremost ones," and similarly the wretched, who in the words of the Qur'ān are Aŝhāb al-Shimāl, or "the people of the left," are few, and the majority consists of average people, whom the Qur'ān calls Aŝhāb al-Yamīn, or "the ".people of the right

:After this, Mullāh Ŝadrāā says

فلأهل الرحمه والسلامه غلبه فی النشأتین

".Thus, the people of mercy and soundness are predominant in both worlds"

One of the latter sages, perhaps the late Āqaā Muhammad Ridhā Qumshi'ī, has some unique verses of poetry about the vastness of the Lord's mercy. In these verses, he reflects the belief of the sages, and rather the broadness of the `Ārifs' (mystics') :stand. He says

مِنْ رَحْمَه بَدَا وَ إِلَـــی رَحْمَهٍ یَؤُلُ,, آن خدای دان همه مقبول و نامقبول

این است سرعشق که حیران کند عقول, از رحمت آمدند و به رحمت روند خلق

این شرک عارضی بوچ و عارضی یزول , خلقان همه به

فطرت توحید زاده ند

با عشق پرده در، چه کند عقل بوالفضول , گوید خرد که سر حقیقت نهفته دار

این نقطه گه صعود نماید گهی نزول ,یک نقطه دان حکایت ما کان و ما یکون

گر خوانیم ظلوم و گر خوانیم جهول , جز من کمر به عهد امانت نبست کس

,Consider all to be Gods', accepted and non-accepted

.From mercy it commenced and to mercy it will return

,From mercy the created ones came, and to mercy they go

.This is the secret of love, which baffles the intellect

,All of creation was born with the innateness of Divine Unity

.This polytheism is incidental, and the incidental subsides

;Says wisdom: Keep hidden the secret of truth

?What will the prying intellect do with love, which pulls aside the curtains

,Consider the story of what was and what will be to be a dot

.This dot sometimes ascends and sometimes descends

,None but I strove to keep the trusts

.Whether you call me oppressive or call me ignorant

The discussion of the sages pertains to the minor premise of an argument, not the major premise. The sages don't discuss what the criterion of a good deed or the criterion of a deed's acceptance are; their discussion is about the human being, about the idea that relatively speaking, in practice, the majority of people to differing .extents are good, remain good, die good, and will be resurrected good

What the sages wish to say is that although those who are blessed to accept the religion of Islām are in a minority, the individuals who possess

.fit'rah (innate) Islām and will be resurrected with innate Islām are in a majority

In the belief of the supporters of this view, what has come in the Qur'ān about the Prophets interceding for those whose religion they approve of is in reference to the innate religion, and not the acquired religion, which, through incapacity, they haven't .reached, but towards which they show no obstinacy

The Sins of Muslims

point

As for the sins of Muslims, this issue has the exact opposite form of first issue (the good deeds of non-Muslims) and is the completion of the previous discussion. The issue is whether the sins committed by Muslims are similar to the sins of non-Muslims .with regard to punishment or not

Broaching the previous issue was necessary from the aspect of its being a matter of intellectual belief; but broaching this issue is a practical necessity, because one of the factors in the fall and ruin of Muslim societies in the present age is the undue pride which in the latter days has come into being in many Muslims, and also in many .Shī`as

If these individuals are asked whether the good deeds of non-Shī`as are acceptable to God, many of them answer, "No." And if they are asked what ruling the evil deeds ".and sins of Shī`as have, they answer, "They are all forgiven

From these two sentences, it is deduced that actions have no value; they have neither positive nor negative value. The necessary and sufficient condition for felicity and salvation is for a

.person to name him or herself Shī`a, and that's it

:Normally, this group argues as follows

First, if our sins and those of others are to be accounted for in the same way, what ?difference is there between Shī`as and non-Shī`as

:Second, there is a well-known tradition

حُبُّ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِی طٌالِبٍ حَسَنَهٌ لاٌ تَضُرُّ مَعَهٌا سَیِّئَهٌ

".Love of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib is a good deed with which no evil deed can bring harm"

In answer to the first argument, it must be said that the difference between Shī`as and non-Shī`as becomes apparent when a Shī`a acts on the program his or her leaders have given him or her and the non-Shī`a also acts on the teachings of his or .her own religion

In such a case, the precedence of the Shī`a, both in this world and in the other, will become clear. That is, the difference should be sought in the positive side, not the negative side. We shouldn't say that if the Shī`a and non-Shī`a put the teachings of their religion under their feet, there must be some difference between them – and if there is no difference in that case, then what difference is there between Shī`as and ?non-Shī`as

This is exactly as if two patients were to refer to a doctor, one referring to an expert doctor and the other to a doctor with less expertise, but when they receive the .doctor's prescription, neither of them acts in accordance with it

Then the first patient complains, saying, "What difference is

there between me and the patient who referred to the non-expert doctor? Why should I remain sick like him, even though I referred to an expert doctor and he referred to a non-expert doctor?"

Just as in the example of the two patients, it is not correct for us to differentiate between `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) and others by saying that if we don't act according to his commands, we will see no harm, but for them, whether they act according to the words of their leader or not, they will be in loss.

One of the companions of Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as) said to the Imām: "Some of your Shī`as have gone astray and consider forbidden actions to be permissible, saying that religion is recognition of the Imām and no more; thus, once you have recognized the Imām, you may do whatever you want."

Imām as-Ŝādiq (as) said:

"Verily we belong to God and to Him shall we return. These unbelievers have interpreted that which they don't know according to their own ideas."

The proper statement is, "Acquire recognition [of the Imām] and do whatever good deeds you want, and they will be accepted of you, for God does not accept actions without recognition."(۱)

Muhammad Ibn Mārid asked Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as): "Is it true that you have said, 'Once you have recognized (the Imām), do what you please'?" The Imām (as) replied, "Yes, that is correct." He said, "Any action, even adultery, theft, or drinking

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۱- Mustadrak al-Wasā'il, Volume ۱, Page ۲۴

wine?!" The Imām (as) replied: "Verily we belong to God and to Him shall we return. I swear by God, they have wronged us. We [the Imāms] ourselves are responsible for our actions; how can responsibility be lifted from our Shī`as? What I said is that once you have recognized the Imām, do what you wish of good deeds, for they will be accepted from you."(۱)

As for the tradition that says:

حُبُّ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِى طٌالِبٍ حَسَنَهٌ لاٌ تَضُرُّ مَعَهٌا سَيِّئَهٌ

"Love of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) is a good deed with which no evil deed will cause harm",

we must see what its interpretation is. One of the eminent scholars I think it was Wahīd Bihbahānī has interpreted this tradition in a noteworthy way. He says that the meaning of the tradition is that if one's love of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) is true, no sin will bring harm to a person. That is, if one's love of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) who is the perfect example of humanity, obedience, servitude, and ethics – is sincere and not out of self-centeredness, it will prevent the committing of sins; it is like a vaccine that brings immunity and keeps sickness away from the vaccinated person.

Love of a leader like `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as), who is the personification of good deeds and piety, causes one to love `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib's character; it chases the thought of sin from one's

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۱- al-Kāfī, Volume ۲, Page ۴۶۴

.mind, with the condition, of course, that one’s love be true

It is impossible for one who recognizes `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) his piety, his tearful prayers, his supplications in the heart of the night and one who loves such a person, to act in opposition to his command, he who always commanded others to be pious and .do good deeds

Every lover shows respect to the wishes of his or her beloved and respects his or her command. Obedience to the beloved is a necessary result of true love; thus it is not exclusive to `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as); true love of the Prophet Muhammad (S) is the same :way. Thus, the meaning of the tradition

حُبُّ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِى طٌالِبٍ حَسَنَهٌ لاٌ تَضُرُّ مَعَهٌا سَيِّئَهٌ

”Love of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) is a good deed with which no evil deed can cause harm“

Is that love of `Alī (as) is a good deed that prevents evil deeds from bringing harm; that is, it prevents their occurrence. It doesn’t indicate the meaning that the ignorant have understood, which is that love of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) is something alongside of .which any sin you may commit will not have an effect

Some dervishes on the one hand claim to love God and on the other hand are more .sinful than all other sinners; these, too are false claimants

:Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as) said

هٌذَا لِعَمْرِى فِى الْفِعٌالِ بَدِيعٌ , تُعْصِى الإِلٌهَ وَأَنْتَ تُظْهِرُ حُبَّهُ

إِنَّ الْمُحِبَّ لِمَنْ

يُحِبُّ مُطِيعٌ , لَوْ كَانَ حُبُّكَ صَادِقاً لَأَطَعْتَهُ

,You disobey God while claiming to love Him

.This by my life is an incredible deed

;If your love were true, you would obey Him

.Verily the lover shows obedience to the beloved

The true friends of Amīrul Mo'minīn `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) would always abstain from sins; his patronage (wilāyah) would protect from sin, not encourage it.

:Imām Muhammad Ibn `Alī al-Bāqir (as) said

مَا تَنَالُ وِلَايَتُنَا إِلَّا بِالْعَمَلِ وَالْوَرَعِ.

"Our patronage is not attained except through deeds and piety."(1)

:Now, some traditions in support of this point

1. Ťāwūs al-Yamānī says: "I saw `Alī ibnil Ĥusain (as) perform the circumambulation the House of God and busying himself in worship from the time of `Ishā prayers until the last part of the night. When he found himself alone, he looked toward the sky and said, "O God! The stars have disappeared in the horizon and the eyes of the people have slept, and Your gates are open to those who seek..."

Ťāwūs narrated many sentences in this regard from the humble and worshipful supplications of the Imām (as) and has said {in regards to the Imām(as)}: "Numerous times in the course of his supplication, he wept." He (Ťāwūs) then said:

"Then he (the Imām) fell to the earth and prostrated on the ground. I approached and, putting his head on my knees, wept. My tears flowed and fell on his face. He rose, sat, and said: "Who has busied me from the remembrance of my

١- Bihārul Anwār, Volume ١٢ (Kumpānī print)

Lord?" I said: "I am Ťāwūs, O son of the Messenger of God. What is this agitation and disquiet? We, who are sinners and full of shortcomings, should do thus. Your father is Ĥusain Ibn `Alīī, your mother is Fāt'ímah Zahrā, and your grandfather is the Messenger of God (S) – that is, with such a noble ancestry and lofty link, why are you :in discomfort and fear?" He looked to me and said

هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ يَا طَاوُوسُ دَعْ عَنِّـى حَدِيثَ أَبِى وَأُمِّى وَجَدِّى، خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْجَنَّهَ لِمَنْ أَطَاعَهُ وَأَحْسَنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ عَبْداً حَبَشِيّاً، وَخَلَقَ النَّارَ لِمَنْ عَصَاهُ وَلَوْ كَانَ وَلَداً قُرَشِيّاً. أَمَّا سَمِعْتَ قَوْلَ تَعَالـى: فَإِذَا نُفْخَ فِى الصُّورِ فَلاَ أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلاَ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ وَاللَّهِ لاَ يَنْفَعُكَ غَداً إِلاَّ تَقْدِمَهٌ تُقَدِّمُهَا مِنْ عَمَلٍ صَالِحٍ

Not at all, O' Ťāwūs, not at all! Leave aside talk of my ancestry. God created Heaven" for those who obey Him and do good, even if he be an Abyssinian slave, and He created Hell for those who disobey him, even if he be a Qurayshī lad. Have you not heard the words of God: "So when the trumpet shall be blown, there will be no relations among them, nor shall they ask one another?" By God, nothing shall benefit (you tomorrow except what good deeds you send forth."(١)

۲. The Messenger of God (S), after the conquest of Makkah, ascended the hill of al-Ŝafāāand called out: "O sons of Hāshim! O sons of `Abdul

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١- Ibid., Volume ١١, Page ٢٥, "Chapter on the Noble Morals of the Fourth Imām"

Mut'ťalib!" The descendents of Hāshim and `Abdul Mut'ťalib assembled; when they :came together, the Messenger (S) addressed them

إِنِّـی رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَیْکُمْ، إِنِّـی لَشَـفِیقٌ عَلَیْکُمْ، لاَـ تَقُولُوا إِنَّ مُحَمَّداً مِنَّا، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا أَوْلِیَائِی مِنْکُمْ وَلاَ مِنْ غَیْرِکُمْ إِلاَّ الْمُتَّقُونَ، فَلاَ تَأْتُونِی یَوْمَ الْقِیَامَهِ تَحْمِلُونَ الـدُّنْیَا عَلی رِقَابِکُمْ وَیَأْتِی النَّاسُ یَحْمِلُونَ الآخِرَهَ. أَلاَّ وَإِنِّـی قَـدْ أَعْـذَرْتُ فِیمَا بَیْنِی وَبَیْنَکُمْ وَفِیمَا بَیْنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَبَیْنَکُمْ وَإِنَّ لِی عَمَلِی وَلَکُمْ عَمَلُکُمْ

Verily I am God's Messenger to you; verily I am your well-wisher. Don't say that" Muhammad is from among us, for I swear by God, my friends from among you and from among others are only the pious ones. So do not let me see you come to me on the Day of Judgement carrying the world on your shoulders, while the people come carrying the Hereafter. Aye, I have left no excuse between myself and you, and between God the Exalted and you. Verily, for me are my deeds and for you are your (deeds."(١

Books of history have written that the Noble Messenger (S), in the last days of his .٣ life, went out alone at night to the cemetery of al-Baqī` and sought forgiveness for those buried in it. After that, he said to his companions, "Each year Jibrā'īl would show the Qur'ān to me once, and this year he recited it for me twice. I think this is a sign that my death has approached." The next day he went to the pulpit

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Bihārul Anwār (Ākhūndī print), Volume ٢١, Page ١١١, from Attributes of the Shī`a by -١ .Shaykh Ŝadūq

and declared, “The time of my death has approached. Whoever I have made a promise to, let him come forward so that I may fulfil it, and whoever is owed something by me, let him come forward so that I may give it.”

Then he continued his words thus:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّهُ لَيسَ بَيْنَ اللّٰهِ وَبَيْنَ أَحَدٍ نَسَبٌ وَلاَ أَمْرٌ يُؤتِيهِ بِهِ خَيْراً أَوْ يَصْرِفُ عَنْهُ شَرًّا إِلاَّ الْعَمَلُ. أَلاَ لاَ يَدَّعَيَنَّ مُدَّعٍ وَلاَ يَتَمَنَّيَنَّ مُتَمَنٍّ، وَالَّذِى بَعَثَنِى بِالْحَقِّ لاَ يُنْجِى إِلاَّ عَمَلٌ مَعَ رَحْمَةٍ وَلَوْ عَصَيْتُ لَهَوَيْتُ. أَللّٰهُمَّ قَدْ بَلَّغْتُ

“O people! Verily there is no kinship between God and any person, nor is there anything on account of which He will do good to a person or cast away evil from him except deeds. Aye, let no one claim or wish (otherwise). I swear by Him Who sent me with the truth, nothing will give salvation save (good) deeds along with mercy, and if [even] I were to disobey, I would perish. O God! I have conveyed.” (1)

4. Imām `Alī Ibn Mūsā al-Ridhā (as) had a brother known as Zayd al-Nār. The character of this brother of the Imām (as) was not very pleasing to the Imām. One day, during the time that the Imām was in Marw, Zayd was present in a gathering in which there was a large group of people who were speaking to each other. While the Imām was speaking, he noticed that Zayd was talking to a

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1- Sharh (Commentary) of Nahjul Balāgha by ibn Abil Ĥadīd, Volume 2, Page 863

group of people and speaking of the station of the Messenger's family, and in a proud manner would constantly say, "we this" and "we that." The Imām (as) cut short his own words and said, addressing Zayd: "What are these things that you are saying? If what you say is correct and the descendents of the Messenger of God (S) have an exceptional status; that is, if God is not to punish their evildoers and will reward them without their doing good deeds, then you are more honourable near God than your father Mūsā Ibn Ja`far (as), because he would worship God until he attained the stations of Divine proximity, whereas you think that without worship you can attain ".(the station of Mūsā Ibn Ja`far (as

The Imām (as) then turned to Ĥasan Ibn Mūsā al-Washshā', one of the scholars of Kūfah who was present in that gathering, saying, "How do the scholars of Kūfah recite :this verse

قَالَ يَا نُوحُ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَٰلِحٍ

".O Nuh! Verily he is not of your family; he is a (doer) of unworthy deeds"

:He replied: "They recite it thus

إِنَّهُ عَمَلُ غَـــــىـرِ صَٰالِحٍ

That is, he is not your son and is not from your seed; he is the son of an unrighteous" ".man

The Imām (as) said, "Such is not the case. They recite the verse incorrectly and :interpret it incorrectly. The verse is thus

إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَٰلِحٍ

That is, your son himself is unworthy. He was

actually the son of Nūh; he was driven away from God and drowned because he himself was unrighteous, even though he was the son of Prophet Nūh (as).

Thus, being descended from and related to the Prophet or Imām has no benefit; good deeds are required."(1)

Creational Conditions and Conventional Conditions

Usually, people compare the Divine rules in creation, reward and punishment, and salvation and perdition to the human societal rules, even though these affairs are in accordance with creational and actual conditions and are a portion of them, whereas social conditions and rules follow conventional, man-made rules.

Social rules can follow conventional conditions, but the rules of creation, and among them Divine reward and punishment, cannot follow these conditions, and instead follow creational conditions. To clarify the difference between a creational system and a conventional system, we present an example:

We know that in social systems, every country has its own particular rules and laws. Social rules, in some issues, differentiate between two people who are equal in physical and creational conditions, but different with respect to conventional conditions.

For example, when they wish to hire someone in Iran, if an Iranian and an Afghani apply for the job and both are equal in terms of creational conditions, it is possible that the Iranian will be hired rather than the Afghani, simply because he is not an Iranian.

In this case, if the Afghani says that I am completely equal in terms of physical conditions to the Iranian who was hired if he is healthy, I too am

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1- Bihārul Anwār (old print), Volume ١٠, Page ۶۵

healthy, if he is young, so am I, if he is a specialist in such-and-such a field, so am I – .he will be given the answer that administrative rules do not permit us to hire you

Based on a conventional and man-made decision, the position of this same Afghani individual can change and become like others; that is, he can apply for and receive Iranian citizenship. It is obvious that citizenship papers have no effect on his actual .personality; but from the view of social rules, he has become another person

Normally, the observance of conventional conditions is concurrent with a lack of .observance of equality in actual and creational conditions

But in issues that do not follow social and conventional rules and instead follow only .creational conditions, the case is different

For example, if God forbid an illness or an epidemic comes to Iran, it will not .differentiate between a citizen of Iran and that of another country

If an Iranian and an Afghani are equal with respect to temperamental, environmental, and all other conditions, it is impossible for the bacteria that cause illness to discriminate and say that since the Afghani is not a citizen of Iran, I have nothing to do with him. Here, the issue is of creation and nature, not society and societal .conventions; the issue pertains to creation, not to legislation and rule-making

The Divine rules with respect to reward and punishment and salvation and perdition .of individuals are subject to actual and creational conditions

It is not the case that if someone claims, “Since my name is recorded in the register of Islām and I am Muslim by name, I must have special treatment,” it will be accepted of .him or her

Let there be no confusion; here we are concerned with the discussion of reward and punishment, salvation and perdition, and the conduct of God with His servants; we .are not talking about the laws that Islām has legislated in the Muslims’ social life

There is no doubt that the laws of Islām, like all other legislations of the world, are a series of conventional laws, and a series of conventional conditions has been observed within them. And in these laws which are related to their worldly life, human .beings, out of necessity, must follow a set of conventional conditions

But the actions of God, and the operation of Divine will in the system of creation – including the granting of salvation and leading to perdition of individuals and rewarding and punishing them do not follow social rules, and instead are of another .type altogether

God, in carrying out His absolute will, does not act on the basis of conventional rules. Conventional matters which naturally have a major effect on social systems have no .role in the creational will of God

From the viewpoint of the rules which Islām has legislated that pertain to the social conduct of human beings, whenever a person recites the two testimonies(١), he or she will be recognized as a Muslim

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١- Meaning that the person bears witness that there is no creature or entity worthy of worship except for Allāh and that Muĥammad is His Prophet and Messenger. (Tr.)

and will benefit from the advantages of Islām. But with regard to the rules of the hereafter and from the viewpoint of God’s conduct, the laws of:

فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِــــى فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّــى

“Whoever follows me, is from me...”(١)

and:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَكُمْ

“Verily the most honourable of you near God is the most pious of you.”(٢)

prevail.

The Messenger of God (S) said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ أَبَاكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، وَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، كُلُّكُمْ لآدَمَ وَآدَمُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ، لاَ فَخْرَ لِعَرَبِيّ عَلى عَجَمِيّ إِلاَّ بِالتَّقْوى

“O people! Verily your father is one, and your Lord is One. All of you are from Adam, and Adam was from dust. There is no pride for an Arab over a non-Arab, except through piety.”(٣)

Salmān al-Fārisī , who strove to reach truth, reached such a station that the Noble Messenger (S) said of him,

سَلْمَانُ مِنَّا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ

“Salmān is one of us, the People of the House.”

There are some who have come under the influence of satanic whisperings and have contented themselves with the thought:

“Our name is among the names of `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib’s (as) friends. However we may be, we are considered his subjects. Or we will make a will that a large sum out of the money that we have acquired through wrong means or that we should have spent in our lifetime in good causes – but didn’t – should be given to the caretakers of one of

the holy shrines in order for us to be buried near the graves of God’s

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Ibrāhīm (۱۴), Verse ۳۶ -۱

Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Ĥujurāt (۴۹), Verse ۱۳ -۲

Tārīkh al-Ya`qūbī, Volume ۲, Page ۱۱۰ -۳

".saints, so that the Angels don't dare punish us

Such people should know that they have been blinded and the curtain of negligence has covered their eyes. Their eyes will open when they will find themselves drowned in Divine punishment and they will suffer from such regret that if it were possible to die, they would do so a thousand times. So let them awake from the slumber of .carelessness today, repent, and make up for what has passed

وَ أَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَهِ إِذْ قَضِی الْأَمْرُ وَ هُمْ فِی غَفْلَهٍ وَ هُمْ لاٰ يُؤْمِنُونَ

And warn them (of) the day of regret, when the affair will be decided while they are" (negligent and don't believe."(۱

From the point of view of the Qur'ān and the Islāmic traditions, it is definite that the sinner, even if Muslim, will be punished by God. True, since he or she has faith, he or she will in the end achieve salvation and liberty from Hell, but it may be that this .salvation will only come after years of hardship and punishment

Some people's account of sins will be cleansed by the hardships of dying; another group will pay the penalty for their sins in the grave and barzakh (intermediary realm between this world and the next); another group will get their retribution in the horrors of Resurrection and difficulties of accounting for their deeds; and yet others will go to Hell and linger there for years in punishment. It has been

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Al-Qur'ān, Sūrat Mariam (۱۹), Verse ۳۹ -۱

:narrated from the sixth Imām, Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as) that the verse

لٰبِثِينَ فِيهَـآ أَحْقَاباً

(lingering therein for ages..."(١)..."

(pertains to those who will attain salvation from Hell.(٢

Here we mention some examples of traditions which talk of the punishments of the time of death and after death so that they may help us take notice, awaken, and prepare ourselves for the daunting and dangerous stations which we have ahead of .us

١. Shaykh Kulaynīnarrates from Imām Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as) that `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) was once suffering from pain in the eye. The Prophet Muhammad (S) went to visit him at a time when he was crying out from the pain. He said, "Is this cry from impatience, or because of the severity of pain?" Amīrul Mo'minīn `Alī Ibn Abī Ťalib (as) ".replied, "O Messenger of God, I have not suffered any pain like this until today

- The Prophet (S) began to narrate the terrifying account of what happens to unbelievers when they die. Upon hearing this, `Alī (as) sat up and said, "Messenger of God, please repeat this account for me, for it made me forget my pain." Then he (as) said, "O Messenger of God! Will anyone from your community face such a death?" He replied, "Yes: a ruler who oppresses, one who usurpsthe property of an orphan, and (one who bears false witness."(٣

٢. Shaykh Ŝadūq narrates in the book 'Man Lā Yah°uruhu al-Faqīh' that when Dharr, the son of Abū Dharr

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١- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Nabā' (٧٨), Verse ٢٣

٢- Bihārul Anwār (Kumpānī print), Volume ٣, Page ٣٧۶-٧

٣- Shaykh `Abbās Qummī , Manāzilul Ākhirah (Islāmiyya print), Page ۵-۶

al-Ghifārī , died, Abu Dharr stood by his grave, put his hand on the grave, and said: "God have mercy on you; I swear by God that you were good to me and now that you have left me I am pleased with you. I swear by God that I am not worried because of your leaving; nothing has been diminished from me, and I am in need of none but God. And were it not for the fear of the time of notification, I would wish that I had gone in your place. But now I wish to compensate for what has passed and prepare for the next world, and verily my grief for your sake has prevented my grief over you. [That is, I am absorbed in thinking about doing something that could benefit you, and so I have no time to grieve at being separated from you.] I swear by God that I have not wept on account of your separation, but I have cried thinking about how you are and what you have gone through. I wish I knew what you said and what was said to you! O God! I have forgiven the rights that You had made obligatory on my son for me, so You too forgive him Your rights over him, for magnanimity and generosity are more befitting of You."(۱)

۳. Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as) narrates from his noble ancestors that the Prophet Muhammad (S)

۱- Ibid., Page ۲۴-۲۵

said, “The squeezing in the grave for a believer is an atonement for the shortcomings (he or she has committed.”(1)

4. Alī Ibn Ibrāhīm narrates from Imām Ja`far Ibn Muhammad as-Ŝādiq (as)` regarding the verse:

وَ مِنْ وَرَّآئِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلـىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

“...and beyond them is a barrier until the day they shall be resurrected.”(2)

that he said:

وَاللّٰهِ مٰا أَخٰافُ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلاّٰ الْبَرْزَخَ فَأَمّٰا إِذٰا صٰارَ الأَمْرُ إِلَيْنٰا فَنَحْنُ أَوْلـىٰ بِكُمْ

“I swear by God, I fear nothing for you except barzakh; as for when the affair is committed to us, we are more worthy of you.”(3)

That is, our intercession is related to after barzakh; there is no intercession in barzakh.

In general, there are so many Qur’ānic verses and clear traditions regarding the punishment for sins such as lying, backbiting, false accusation, treachery, oppression, usurping other’s property, drinking, gambling, tale-bearing, defaming, abandoning prayer, abandoning fasting, abandoning pilgrimage, abandoning Jihād, and so forth that it is beyond reckoning; none of them are exclusive to the unbelievers or non-Shī`as.

In the tradition of the Mi`rāj (Prophetic ascent to Heaven), we find many examples where the Prophet Muhammad (S) says: “I saw various groups of my community, men and women, in different forms of punishment, who were being punished on account of various sins.”

Summary and Conclusion

From all that has been said in this section about the good and bad deeds of Muslims and non-Muslims, the following conclusions can be reached:

1. Both salvation and perdition have degrees and levels; neither the people of salvation are all

p: ۱۴۵

۱- Bihārul Anwār (Kumpānī print), Volume ۳, Page ۱۵۳, from Thawābul A`māl and al-Amālī of Shaykh Sadūq

۲- Al-Qur'ān, Sūratul Mu'minūn (۲۳), Verse ۱۰۰

۳- Bihārul Anwār (Kumpānī print), Volume ۳, Page ۱۵۱, from Tafsīr `Alī ibn Ibrāhīm

at the same level, nor are those of perdition. These levels and differences are called darajāt “levels of ascent” with regard to the people of Heaven and darakāt “levels of descent” with regard to the inhabitants of Hell.

۲. It is not the case that all of the dwellers of Heaven will go to Heaven from the beginning, just as all of the people of Hell will not be in Hell for eternity. Many dwellers of Heaven will only go to Heaven after suffering very difficult periods of punishment in barzakh or the hereafter. A Muslim and a Shī`a should know that, assuming he or she dies with sound faith, if God forbid he or she has committed sins, injustices, and crimes, he or she has very difficult stages ahead, and some sins have yet greater danger and may cause one to remain eternally in Hell.

۳. Individuals who don’t believe in God and the hereafter naturally don’t perform any actions with the intention of ascending towards God, and since they don’t perform good deeds with this intent, by necessity they do not embark on a journey towards God and the hereafter. Thus, they naturally don’t ascend towards God and the higher realm and don’t reach Heaven. That is, because they were not moving towards it, they don’t reach that destination.

۴. If individuals believe in God and the hereafter, perform actions with the intention of seeking nearness to God, and are sincere in their

actions, their actions are acceptable to God and they deserve their reward and .Heaven, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims

۵. Non-Muslims who believe in God and the hereafter and do good deeds with the intention of seeking nearness to God, on account of being without the blessing of Islām, are naturally deprived of benefiting from this Divine program. That proportion of their good deeds is accepted which is in accordance with the Divine program, such as forms of favours and services to God's creation. But invented acts of worship that without base are naturally unacceptable, and a series of deprivations resulting from .unavailability of the complete program apply to and include them

۶. Accepted good deeds, whether of Muslims or otherwise, have certain afflictions which may come about afterwards and corrupt them. At the head of all of these afflictions is rejection, obstinacy, and deliberate unbelief. Thus, if non-Muslim individuals perform a great amount of good deeds with the intention of seeking nearness to God, but when the truths of Islām are presented to them show bias and obstinacy and set aside fairness and truth-seeking, all of those good deeds are null ".and void, "like ashes caught in a strong wind on a stormy day

۷. Muslims and all other true monotheists, if they commit indecencies and transgressions and betray the practical aspect of the Divine program, are deserving of long punishments in barzakh and the Day of Judgement, and occasionally because ,of some sins

.like intentionally murdering an innocent believer, may remain in eternal punishment

The good deeds of individuals who don't believe in God and the Day of Judgement .٨ and perhaps may ascribe partners to God will cause their punishment to be lessened .and, occasionally, be lifted

Felicity and perdition are in accordance with actual and creational conditions, not .٩ .conventional and man-made conditions

The verses and traditions that indicate that God accepts good deeds do not look .١٠ solely to the action-related goodness of actions; in Islām's view, an action becomes good and worthy when it possesses goodness from two aspects: action-related, and .actor-related

The verses and traditions that indicate that the actions of those who deny . ١١ Prophethood or Imāmate are not acceptable are with a view to denial out of obstinacy and bias; however, denial that is merely a lack of confession out of incapacity (quŝūr) – rather than out of culpability (taqŝīr) – is not what the verses and traditions are about. In the view of the Qur'ān, such deniers are considered musta°`af (powerless) and murjawn li'amr illah (those whose affair is referred to .(God's command

In the view of the Islāmic sages such as Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā) and Mullāh Ŝadrā , the .١٢ majority of people who haven't confessed to the truth are incapable and excusable rather than culpable; if such people do not know God they will not be punished – though they will also not go to Heaven – and if they believe

in God and the Resurrection and perform pure good deeds with the intention of seeking nearness to God, they will receive the recompense for their good deeds. Only .those will face perdition who are culpable, not those who are incapable

أَللَّهُمَّ اخْتِمْ لَنَا بِالْخَيْرِ وَ السَّعَادَهِ وَ تَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ، وَ أَلْحِقْنَا بِالصَّالِحِينَ بِمُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِهِ الطَّاهِرِينَ

O God! Seal (our fate) for us with goodness and felicity, and cause us to die as Muslims, and join us with the righteous, Muhammad and his noble Progeny (may .(Peace be upon all of them

p: ۱۴۹

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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Commerce and sale: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹
Users' affairs: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹

Introduction of the Center – Ghaemiyeh Digital Library


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